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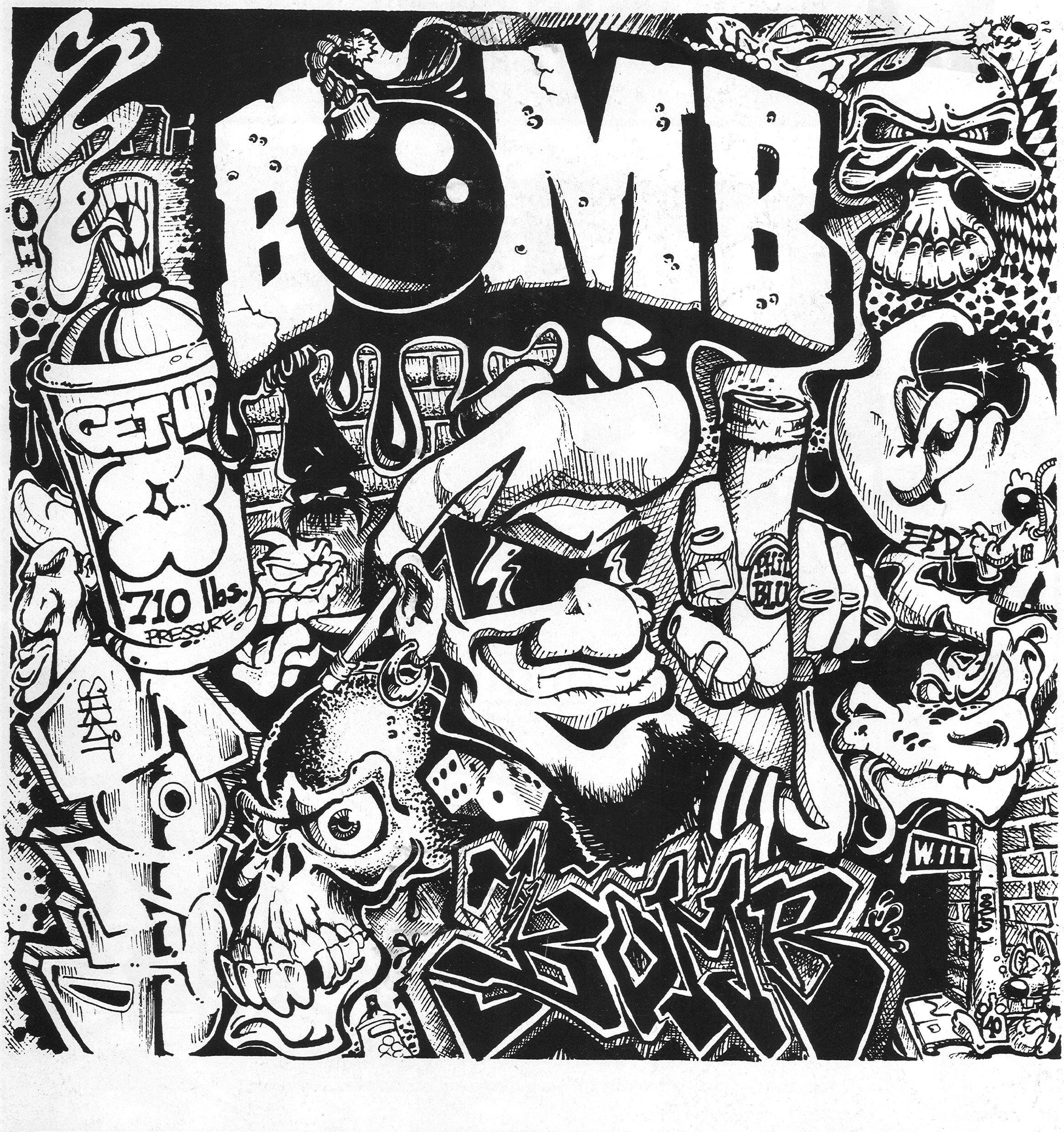
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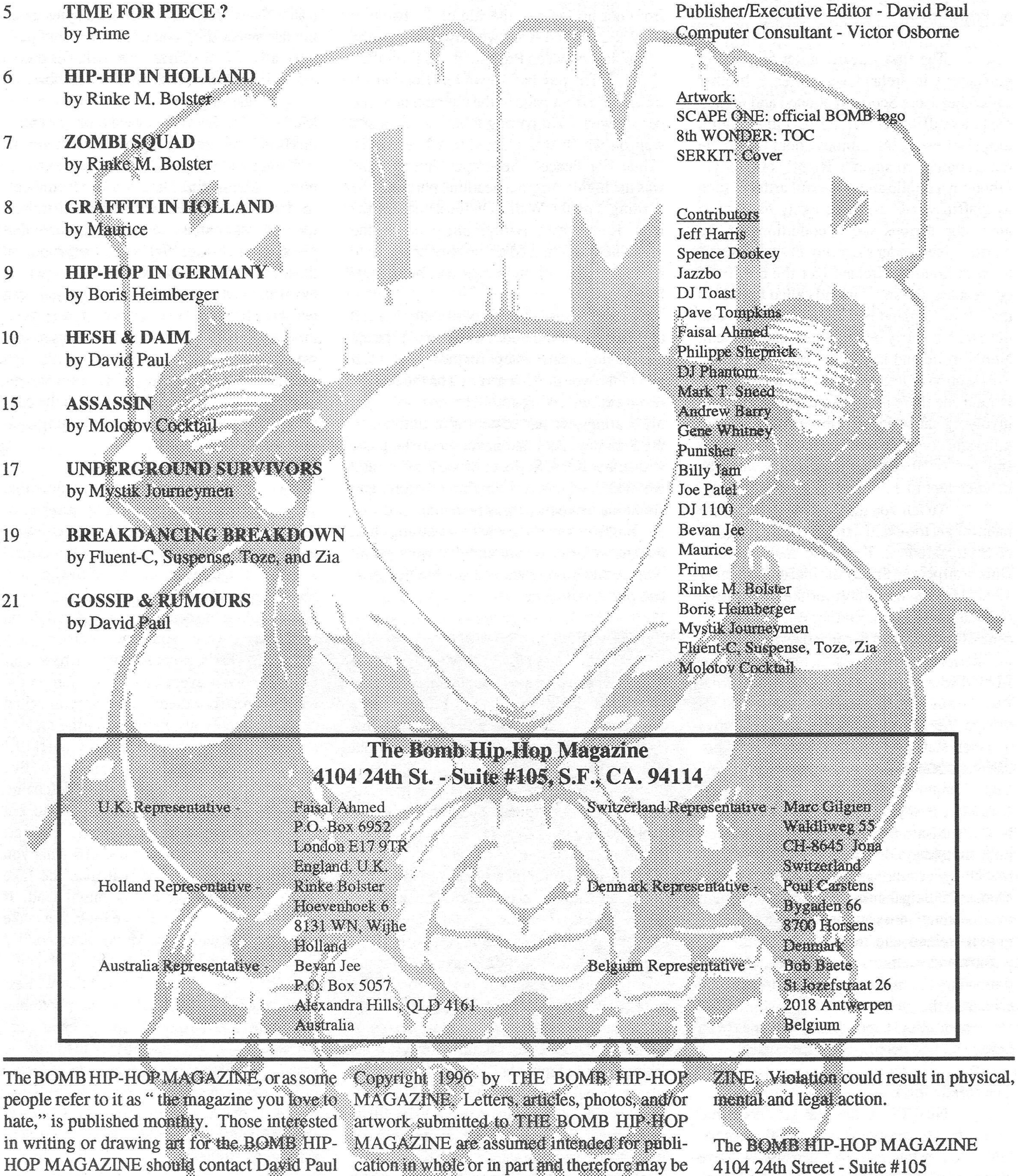

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MADE IN THE U.S.A.

ttime ffor ppiece ??

by Prime

The first I heard about any sort of graf scene in Ireland was when a brother called Eez from Scotland phoned and invited me to a graffiti fest on the Isle. I must admit, initially I was a bit dubious about the whole thing coming off smooth. Rightly or wrongly I thought a public and powerful artform such as graffiti would be more likely to flourish amist the serious social conditions of the North - a land under siege, not in a fairly small town in Southern Ireland (for the benefit of our readers, the small island called Ireland to the left of England is a divided land). While the South is fairly peaceful and independent, Northern Ireland is affected by the troubles. This section of Ireland is part of (not so) Great Britain and there is, or was, constant fighting involving shootings, bombing (the kind that kills) and division, between those that want to stay part of Britain and those that want to be independent like the South.

To tell you the truth I didn't prepare much or get too excited til our crew consisting of Stylo, Mode 2, Keen and me arrived at Dublin airport on Friday the 2nd of December 1994. Meeting our escort for the stay Darren (Raskal) I soon realised that if not the world centre for graffiti art, Drogheda was probably the friendliest place on earth, even when confronted with black brothers all the way from Paris. Another encouraging sign was that although there were often hitches these guys had their stuff well organised with accommodations, small allowances and nuff paint. Now I don't know too much about the rest of the world but in my opinion in London, writers lack organisation and discipline when planning anything to do with writing. Apart from the 'Unity' events that involve nuff behind the scenes planning thanks solely to Elk, we seem to have a hit n' miss attitude. Respect to those guys in Ireland who know that if you have the artform and want to see it progress, like anything you gotta put in time and effort - not just rely on a bit of raw talent and short-lived excitement. But I suppose this all comes from being genuine people in the first place.

Troubled Children

Now I'm a guy that gets deep into concepts. The reasoning and significance behind this trip interested me because we were alone to paint walls on two ends of a bridge across the River Boinne, and before any of our graffiti mural antics this bridge was already called the Bridge of Peace! (about 2 miles up from our bridge was the site of the battle in 1692 that started what we now know as the 'Troubles' between Protestant and Catholic).

The day before we left London for Ireland the front page of the national newspaper showed a kid patting a ball up against a wall on which was painted in white words, 'Time For Peace'. Accompanying that pic was the highly original headline phrase, 'The Writing's on the Wall'. On the same day the Irish Republican Army, one side in the 'Troubles' announced a ceasefire bringing to a end 25 years of shootings and bombings. Strange world.

Because of this I personally wanted to paint something about the theme of peace and making positive steps for the future in that part of the world. After arriving on the Friday, resting up and taking a stroll round town to get my bearings, we started putting up outlines on the Saturday. As I had never painted a piece with either Keen, Stylo, or Mode 2 before and we hadn't discussed anything beforehand about the piece there was potential for disaster. But from the start, what made things turn out smooth was the amount that we were all prepared to co-operate and see the things as one piece, our piece.

Peace By Piece

It's said that you only really know a person when you travel with them, work with them or live with them. Well I did all three with this crew and it's funny how your thoughts of how someone will be differ and turn out differently.

Now I know Stylo more than the others, He's skillful and a talented artist and took our teasing about his abstract work in stride. This style helped to bring a new angle to the piece and complemented our bright city life styles with his 'back to the Earth' aboriginal link. Mode 2 is strange. Chill on this. He was the guy who I thought would have to 'check in' his head at the airport coz it was too big to take as hand luggage, but it's good to get pleasantly surprised. As for his talent, it just kicks hard, as anyone that's picked up a graf mag would see, though it ain't always to his liking to be in them. And those characters he just pulls out from nowhere without following sketches or anything? A dett artist with the most street flavour and one of the world's most acclaimed character artists. Keen is also cool but I do not know how he got his name coz he didn't seem to be keen or anything. Though I know he's taking a hardcore life in his stride. A guy that respects highly 'traditional' New York semi and wildstyles using intense sweet shop colour schemes and pulling it all off well with his own lick. His pieces are well armoured with style for combat.

Getting back to the actual event, Mode, Stylo, Keen and myself took one end of this bridge measuring appox 12ft high and 50-60ft long and painted the whole thing top to bottom. Meanwhile Dase and Eez from Scotland and some brothers from Northern Ireland took the other side and pulled off some dett pieces with a bridge, fields and mushrooms in the piece with nuff skill and style. The whole event showed again that not only London can get busy but also more unexpected parts of this Not-so-Great Britain. It also showed that we can organise events that run smooth through love and respect for the artform (not forgetting the guys who organised a jam in the park for all the town while we were painting).

Muller Rice?

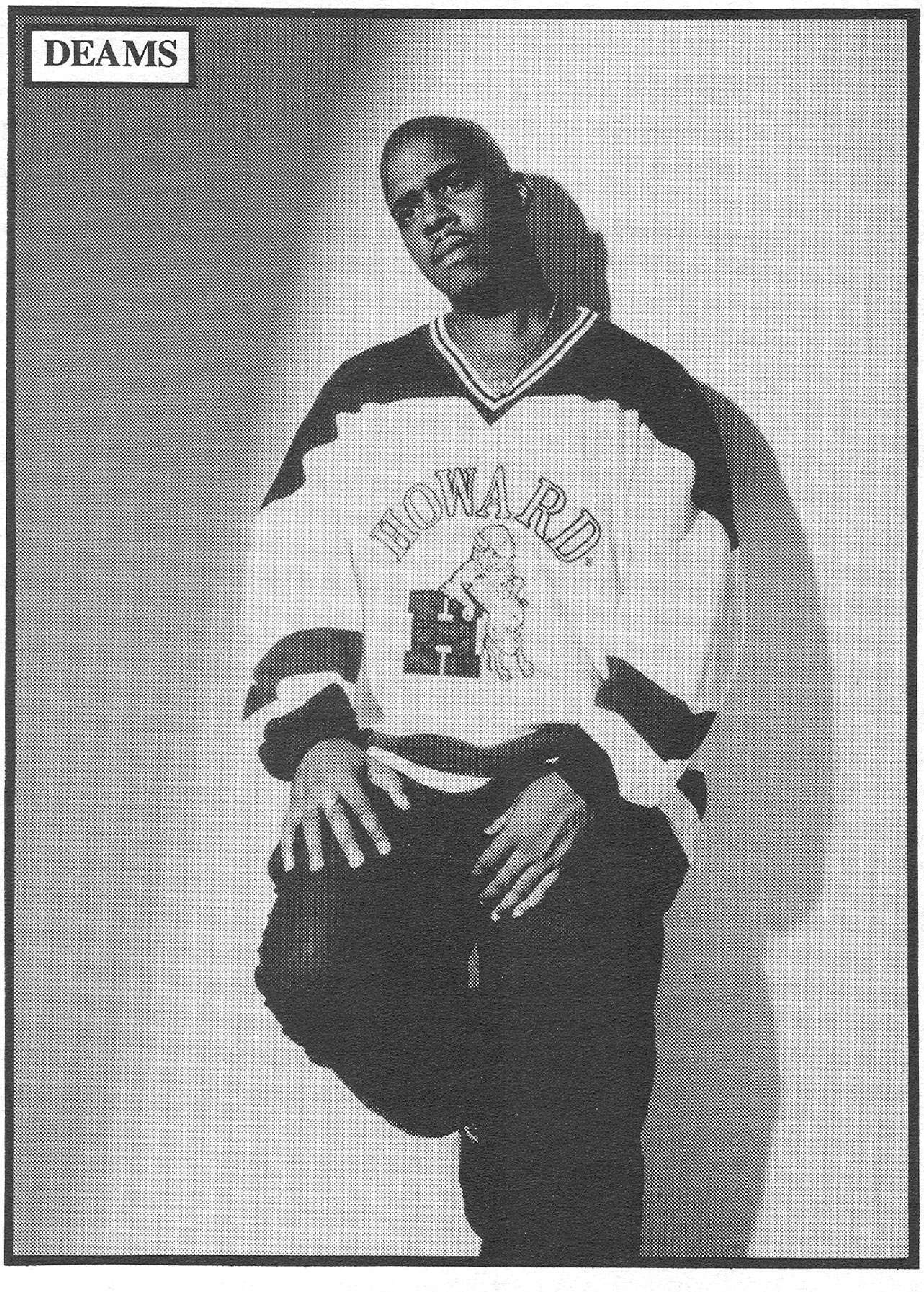
I want to make one thing clear that showing and proving is just a by-product of our love and respect for writing and getting on with our lives. I for one ain't worried about the attitudes of the rest of the world towards the scene from where I come from, especially Europe where it seems alot of watered down graffiti facism is creeping into some people's attitudes. That's probably why a new graf mag comes out every day somewhere in the rest of Europe coz there's too many conceited people probably just painting for the mags. I ain't dising mags but we're near overkill I think. And I don't care for those that go on like that. You might have all the talent, dett paint, happy parents and authories in the world, but if your attitude stinks, you stink, your art stinks and your opinions stink, coz what you are as a person is more real than the fake graffiti-pretentious life you might lead. If Muller Rice tastes dett but the fools that make it are facist I won't eat Muller Rice coz I'd give substance and reality to their shit. F... that. Major big up to all Scotland crew, Eez, Dase, the chill skinhead Moda, photoman Andy, the band that couldn't play (real shame) and especially to Eez the big man in this thing, respect. All Irish crew: Raskal, Artz, Raskal's other half organising dons and donnette, Keen, Mode 2, Stylo, and the friendlt people of Drogheda, all peace now and for the future throughout Ireland.

This article originally appeared in Graphotism Magazine issue #6. Re-printed by permission from Graphotism Magazine.

HIP-HOP IN HOLLAND

by Rinke M. Bolster

For starters do you know where Holland is? It's that small country between Germany and England. Still doesn't ring a bell? Well we're famous for our wooden shoes, tulips, windmills and our dikes... true indeed... but did you know that other other European countries think of The Netherlands as being the most anarchist country in the European Community. Here we have no law that forbids soft-drugs, in fact, Amsterdam gets more sex and (soft) drugs related foreign visitors than actual sightseeers.



DEAMS

As I said dope (as in soft) isn't forbidden but it isn't legal either; we have a policy here that's called "het gedoogbeleid" (the toleration policy), it means that when you carry less than 4.5 grams of cannabis products then nothing's the matter. When you use cannabia you don't hurt a soul, it doesn't make you an addict (like alcohol or hard drugs).

In Holland we have lot of crews all doing their thing. The Osdorp Posse from Amsterdam, 4 guys who started out translating NWA-songs from English to Dutch. Now they're doing their own thing, with their fourth album out. Their lyrics are all in Dutch and because they're so popular an entire scene has formed around them. This rap-current calls itself Nederhop, and these groups all sound alike. DJAX in the major Nederhop label. Nederhop lyrics usually discuss frustrations you can run into as a Dutch adolescent, as well as the enjoyment of the available drugs, sex and parties.

From Den Bosch comes Def Real, their laid back style described as Mellow in the Mind contains basically nothing. They've just released their second album, (Potdamn here it is) which combines a lot of different things: Eastcoast creativity combined with Hispanic-ish bi-linqual crossovers. They were also helped on this project by the Zombi Squad.

The Zombi Squad, who are they? The Zombi's are a crew from my hometown of Groningen. Last year they released their EP Rough & Poetically which sold very well. I can't introduce all the Dutch rappers and crews of course but I don't want to hold this guy back from you. His name is Deams and he's the first Dutch rapper who has had an album produced by Guru. Not that he needs it but still... it's called Mad Game. Also look for his double A-sided 12" called "Get It On / Settin' It Off". He also opened up for the GZA concert in Amsterdam last month.

If you're interested in the scene here in Holland you should definitely check out the following albums "R*hythm & Rhyme a rap compilation vol. 2*" and "Exiles from tha Neverlands", they give a good look at Holland's rap history, with tracks by Osdorp Posse, Scorpio, MC Sranang and guys like that. If you're more into what's happening now then you'd have to check out "The Dutch Masters' and "The Blockbuster Sampler", these two samplers came out last year and are filled with what's hot in Holland. These compilations are very versatile but all have one common denominator throughout, they represent the new sound of Holland.

We do have gangs like the Blood and the Crips, especially in the Hague area, they think that Holland is like America in every sense of the word but you must agree that that isn't totally true: well we watch MTV and we do eat at McDonalds every once in a while but apart from that? Do we have to kill to survive? And aren't the Bloods and the Crips in a truce at this moment? What is also true is that when you are out of a job you get a fairly decent unemployment benefit so why should you beat up old women for their small pensions? Where is their honor?

Finally parties are beginning to come up in Holland and more of a culture is arising. In some youth centers you have hip-hop nights but still too small an amount; besides those you have the weekly two hour pain reliever called Villa #65, that's a radio show hosted by Mental Case the King and they spin the latest imports. On Hollands own MTV-ish channel we have the Pitch, it isn't much but it's all we have and we cherish it. I know I've forgotten a lot of crews and rappers out there in The Netherlands but if you let me know who you are I'll try to arrange something for you in the future.

ZOMBI SQUAD

by Rinke M. Bolster

Bomb: Who are you (who does what?) how did you all team up and when and how long have you been down?

Zombi Squad: We're Mad Pat (producer), Shockwave (rapper), Sherlock (rapper), Freez (DJ), DRC (engineer, live). We teamed up about 5 years ago after two rivalizing rapcrews from Groningen got together. But individually all the members have been doin' their thing for 10 years now.

Bomb: Disc-o-graphy, demos, gigs?

ZS: By winning a rap contest back in 1990 we could record a promotional single called "Dizzy". Then in '92 we were the force behind "Exiles from the Neverlands" on which we did 4 songs of our own. Around May '94 another hardcore hip hop sampler came out but this time it was pan-European going by the name of "Brainkilla", which we represented with the cut "Movement Against Nazis". Then we co-did "Blockbuster the sequel to Exiles" on which we did 4 songs as well. June 1995 saw the release of our first 12"/EP called "Rough and Poetically". We've done a lot of gigs in The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France and Norway and the list goes on and on. Now our new CD is on the verge of coming out.

Bomb: You did some projects like Exiles and Blockbusters, what reactions did you get on those?

ZS: We got a lot of positive reaction but of course also a lot of negative and those mostly from people in the scene that weren't doing anything for themselves or others.

Bomb: How would you describe the Zombi-style?

ZS: We don't have a particular style or maybe we do but that's for the audience to decide. Whatever they want, we're not!!

Bomb: (this is personal) During the "Kultuur in Kleur" festival you made a very "American" impression on me, do you get your inspiration from American rappers?

ZS: NO!!!!

Bomb: What needs to happen in Holland and why do Dutch-crews deserve international airplay?

ZS: Dutch crews need to look and listen to their direct environment more, so to Holland/Europe, and co-operate more. They need to bomb the media with more quality demos - and biomaterial, LPs and CDs until the media can't deny them no more, and... yes they deserve airplay.

Bomb: How does it feel to see all kinds of hip- hop crews in Holland and Europe?

ZS: Feels good, as long as they are doing their thing for doing their thing, not for the fame and fortune.

Bomb: What can the world expect from the ZS in the future?

ZS: Same stuff as in the past but better and more.

Bomb: Is the world ready you guys?

ZS: Yes indeed, no doubt.

Bomb: What do you see as the biggest problem for hip hop at the moment?

ZS: Groups that have just been born that have a couple of hits and call it a day. Hip hop needs powerful stayers who can get through to the community in all its layers and parts.

And you accomplish that by being a serious stayer without going for the fame and the fortune in the first place.

Bomb: Some people compare hip hop to house, what do you think about that?

ZS: People without insight say those things.

Bomb: What is the business all about for you?

ZS: About getting your message out by means of gigs and record releases.

Bomb: You're a multiracial group, for some audiences that's a problem...

ZS: People who have problems with that have a problem themself.

GRAFFITI IN HOLLAND

by Maurice

For us it all started in the early 80s, the book Subway Art and the movies Wildstyle, Stylewars and Beat Street found their way to 12-13 year old kids. This is the same for other countries but there is seems to me it happened a few years later and less hectic. Holland had one x-tra influence: exhibitions in the musea of Amsterdam and Rotterdam by QUIK, LEE, SEEN, BLADE, and FUTURA which was visited by those 12-13 year old kids. Among those kids were guys which we now know as Dutch kings; SHOE, DELTA, and GASP. The exhibition was an x-tra treat for them being able to hear from the first generation of graffiti writers what graffiti was all about. SHOE started a crew with DELTA, JAZ, JEZIS and JOKER called the UNITED STREET ARTISTS. In the early 80s they did a lot of tagging pieces and legal jobs,"We used about 400 cans each week" remembers SHOE.

A lot of kids who visited Amsterdam were influenced and started doing graffiti in their own cities and all hell broke loose when the media picked it up with coverage on TV and a lot of articles in newspapers and fancy magazines. Then it looked like everybody between 12-14 years of age was painting. I can remember drawing letters and characters from Subway Art over and over again and putting my name up everywhere I could. It was definitely a very important period for graffiti in Holland.

Then people who were doing this form of art (writers) could only see work of other writers outside their city through traveling. This was very important for them to see other work of art and seeing new styles of letters and technical improvements. So through traveling they made contacts with other people who stood for the same thing as they did and there was a bond. The trading of photos came up through this and they were able to see what was going on in other cities. Making photos is very important because their work is very vulnerable (cleaning and destroying by other writers) and of course to show others their work.

In late 1988 the first graffiti magazine came out: Freestyle. This magazine showed photos of pieces, tags and even addresses of writers who you choose to write to trade photos with. It was a small (A5) black and white copied magazine with a small circulation. It had success and there was obviously a need for such a magazine. Freestyle came out about 6 times a year for several years. Unfortunately it doesn't exist anymore.

true COLORZ

Some months later in the same year the second magazine came out "Bomber Magazine", a magazine which focused mostly on the illegal side of the street art. Bomber Magazine started as a black and white copied magazine but became more professional in 1993 with printed black and white pages. Bomber Magazine still exists and only comes out once a year. In 1990 another magazine came up called "Now Skool", the word now skool came from the word 'new school' which means something as the new generation. This magazine showed mostly walls and legal works of art. In 1990 a magazine called "Virus" came out with several copies. These magazines were made and financed by writers themselves. So they were published now and then when there was money and time. These magazines were sold at places where writers hung out and bought their spraycans.

In January 1993 Now Skool Magazine changed its name into True Colorz Street Art Magazine, a magazine with an International character because between 1990 and 1993 a lot changed. "Graffiti" came up in countries such as Germany, France, and Denmark as well. Germany was the first of these countries with an important magazine. 'On the Run' magazine was very important for the development of the culture in Germany. A lot of news which could not be found in the books was brought by these magazines in the early '90s. In these magazines were news about national as well as international street art available. In this period of time it was very important to see graffiti from other countries and read interviews with writers from other countries.

In Holland in 1994 the two magazines were accompanied by a third magazine called Idiots, a black and white printed magazine which is mostly about Dutch street art. In Germany the "hell broke loose". After On the Run came out in the early '90s lots of magazines followed the initiative which reached its highest level in 1994 with over 50 magazines hailing from Germany.

In early 1995 we saw new developments: Two German books just came out: Spray City a book about Berlin graffiti and the book Graffiti Art which covers the German graffiti development both on trains and walls. Also look for Graffiti Art Germany Volumes 2 & Graffiti Art #3 (Writing in Munich). Other books to search for include Hall of Fame from Germany, Sabotage (Graffiti Art On Trains In Europe) from Paris, and Backjumps Berlin Train Special from Germany.

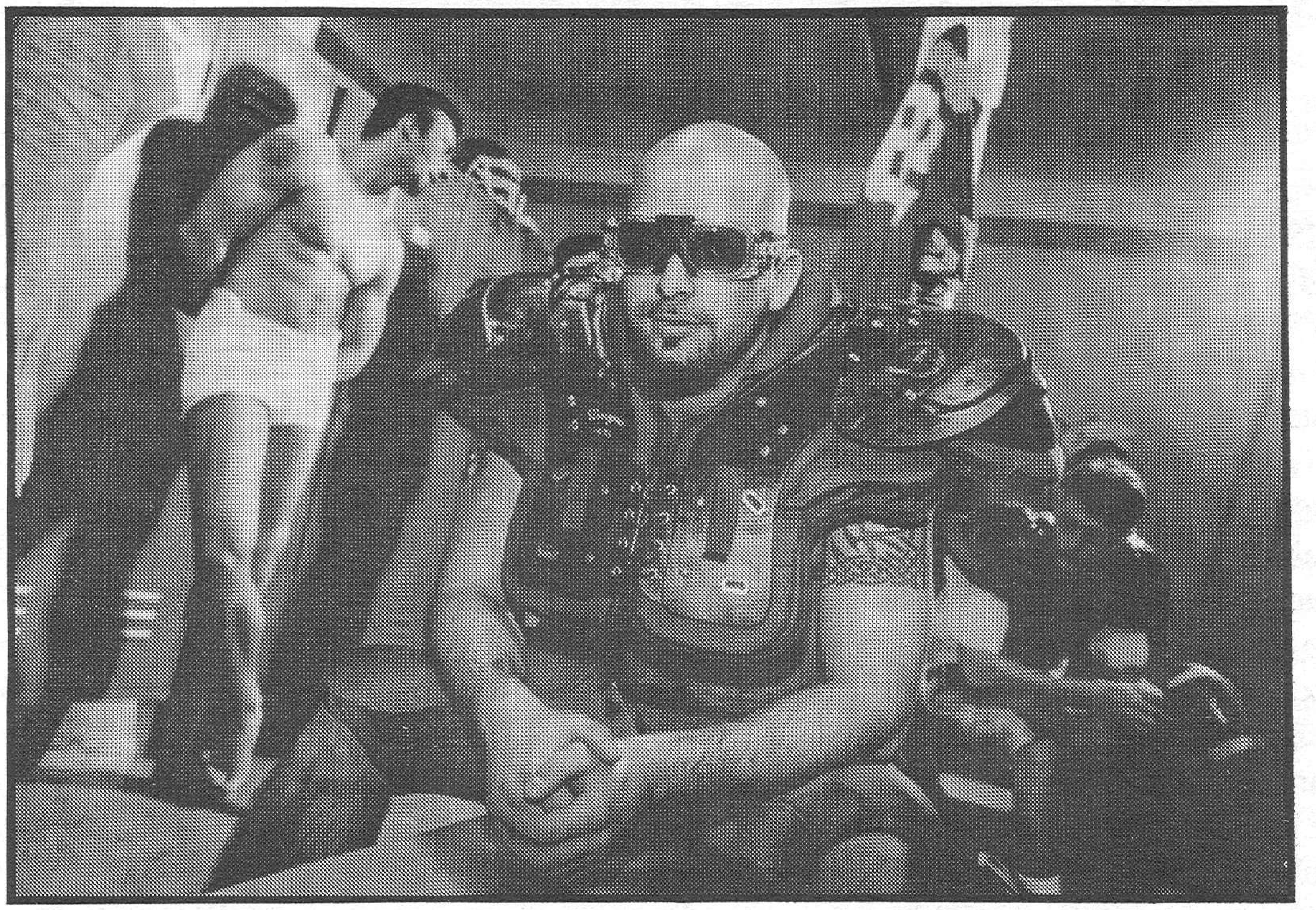
Another medium which covers graffiti developments are graff video's. Graphotism from the U.K. comes out every two months with an update on U.K. hall of fames and Amsterdam hall of fames. Until now they have released 10 issues. Underground Video Productions, a new label which is supported by True Colorz Magazine from Holland is coming out with Rolling Steel Part 3, with an update on trains and subways from Holland.

Hip-Hop In Germany

by Boris Heimberger

When I went to the States for the first time in 1986 I would say I was the typical European kid. I was a MOD and Ska & New Wave music was the hype. I went to a record shop while I was out there and bought some promo Sugarhill records with a lot of Grandmaster Flash on it. I had read some stuff on hip-hop but had never heard of Melle Mel. Then I went to a Whodini concert and guess who was the special guest that night, Run DMC... who at that time had not discovered Adidas yet.

Hip-Hop in Germany has a similar beginning like in the US. Although strongly influenced by overseas records and movies like Wild Style, it turned and flowed in a different direction caused by a different enviroment. Graffiti and breakdancing came out big but it only lasted for one summer. But hip-hop survived in the underground with people still bombing trains and rap jams at special clubs. At that time we did not have MTV or anything comparable in Europe - but with it's start about three years ago hip-hop broke thru to get more popular and our own industry started to grow. The German equivalent of MTV's Yo Raps is VIVA's Freestyle which presents a comfortable mixture of US, GB and German Hip-Hop. Low budget bands sit together on the interview couch with the Beastie Boys and a crew of VJs travel around the country to make updates.



Special clubs that play 100% hip-hop are rare. In Hamburg you will find all those special clubs in the Red Light district around the Reeperbahn, which is very famous not only for their prostitutes but also for the highest density of bars, music clubs, and discos. Due to the amount of sex and crime in that area it is not a beneficial enviroment. But the advantage of 'no limit opening hours' makes it to be one of the most famous areas in Europe. Famous clubs are The Mojo (more jazz oriented), Molotow (hardcore), and The Powerhouse which is separated in two parts - one for jungle music and one for hip-hop. The Powerhouse is the most favorite for US rappers who are touring and/or hanging out after a show. In the Summer of 94 I met Ice T and his Body Count crew as well as House of Pain at The Powerhouse. There are also a lot of jams all over the city where German DJs mainly play native music intermixed with live acts. Breaking is not very big in the clubs except for The Powerhouse and I have to admit that I do not know any breakers because most of those guys are from the suburbs.

Live acts always depend on the season - which is Spring to Fall. Summer 94 we had a open air concert featuring Ice Cube and Gang Starr that was a highlight. Unfortunately the Amerikkkas Most Wanted Tour, featuring Ice T, Ice Cube, and Public Enemy was cancelled. Word had it that it was cancelled due to a management problem. Same thing happened with the scheaduled Warren G concert in 95. We'll see what happens this year.

Like the clubs there are not any pure hip-hop radio stations, but almost everyday hip-hop dj's have their hours to play rap music. The good thing is that there is no censorship here. Example: Everday you can hear the 20 Fingers original "Short Dick Man" on the radio.

Like in the states the US Rap Music market is very big and you can find everything in the big mall record shops including local independent German releases. But shops like Zardoz in Altona normally have the brand new releases first, that's where I found the "Bomb Hip-Hop Compilation" on compact disc. The relation of import and domestic right now is 70% import to 30% domestic right now, but domestic is increasing rapidly. CD's have practically taken over the market out here and cassettes are almost out and are just used for black copies. I think they keep a little bit of vinyl alive for the DJs to scratch with and sample.

It's hard to describe the scene in detail because even in the city of Hamburg different styles occur due to ethnic and musical background. Germany is full of immigrants from Turkey, former Yugoslavia and of course Africa. Consequently everyones rappin' in the lanquage that he or she prefers. Due to a grand hardcore community, rock influences in German hip-hop are much stronger than in the states.

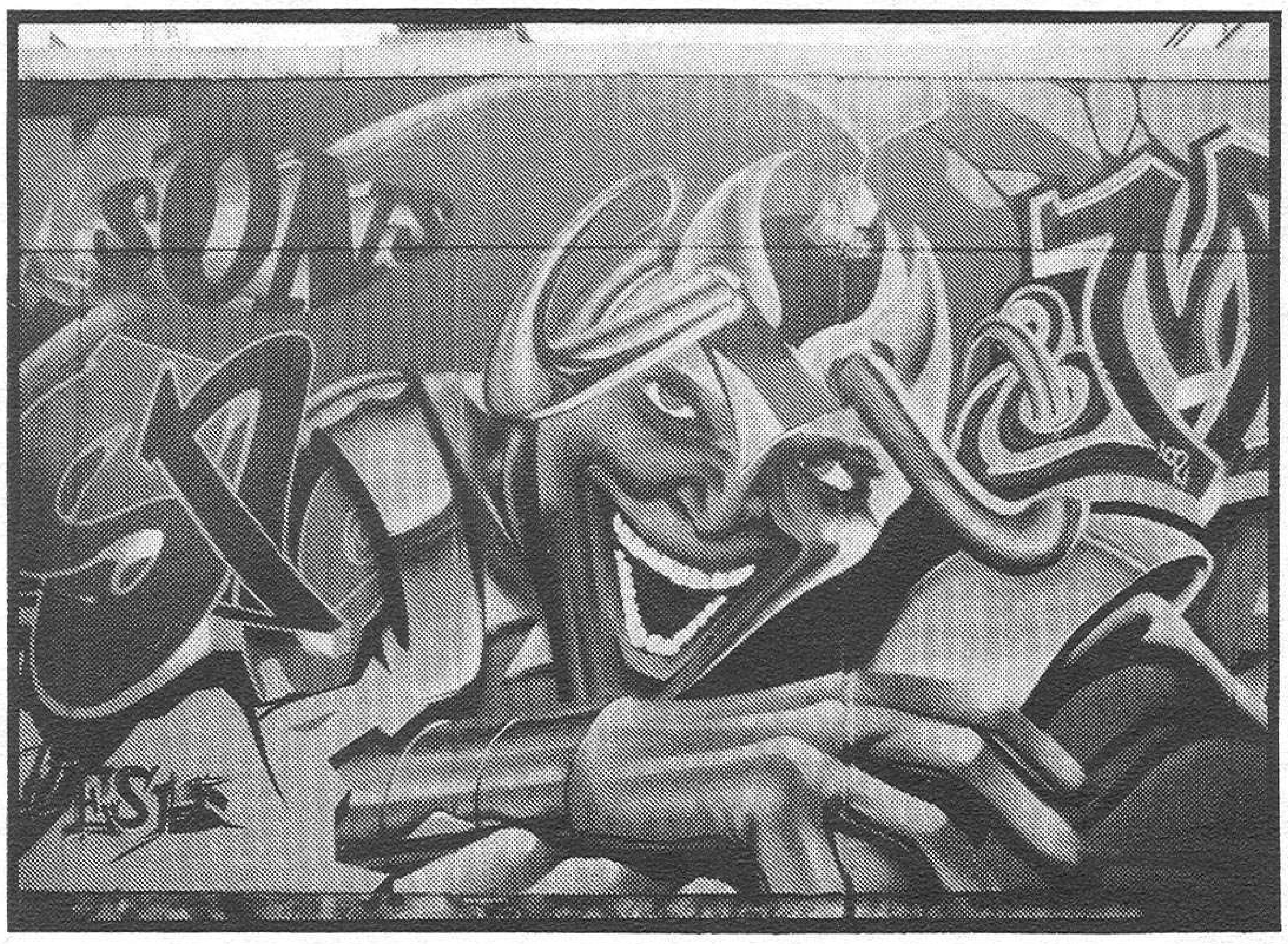
Graffiti artists like Hesh and Daim actually earn enough money from their art to live from and other groups like Fantastische Vier (fantastic four) are megastars. If you meet Miro (alias sprayer Mesh, alias rapper Masquerade) you might have the impression that you have just met a lazy bum (this probably comes from his yugoslavian background) but once he starts working his creativity of music and graffiti it definitely makes him to be the GM of his hood Altona.

HESH and DAIM

interview by David Paul

Bomb: How and when did you get into graffiti?

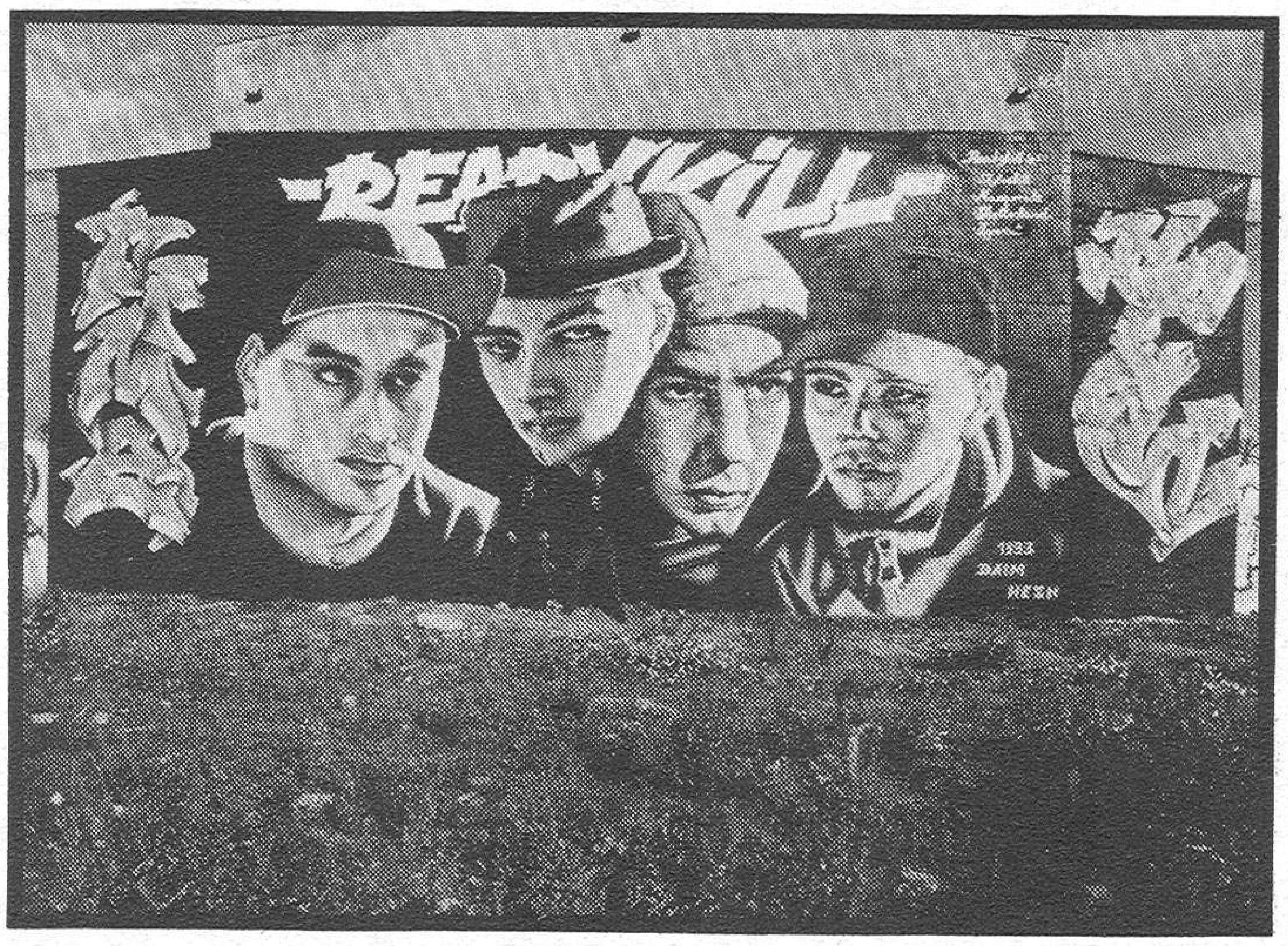
Hesh: I first started doing graffiti in 85. I was impressed by two guys in my neighborhood who did a lot of tags and throw ups. So I wanted to do what they were doing... a week later the whole hood was bombed with my tags. One day I found a message on a graffiti wall that those two guys wanted to meet me so I went to meet them. They were fucking cool so we built a crew to bomb the whole town.



Daim: I first photographed graffiti in mid 89 and then made my first script following the photos, which I sprayed together with two friends. At the beginning of 1990 we founded our crew, Trash Can Design, and did our first work order.

Bomb: The books Subway Art and Spraycan Art inspired a lot of kids here in the states. Did those books ever reach Europe and did they have any effect on the movement?

Daim: Those two books had been a bible to us. They have been very important in helping us find our style. Thru those books we got to know where graffiti was coming from and the New York writers earned a lot of respect. Without those books graffiti would have taken years longer to develop in Germany and Europe. Nevertheless I started spraying very late so I was also influenced by German & European writers, so those books were not my only source.



Bomb: Did the movie Wildstyle and the documentary Style Warz have a influence out there in Germany?

Daim: Those movies influenced Europe the same way Subway & Spraycan Art did. They had been very important in showing a sprayer what is possible to do with a spray can.

Bomb: Were there any writers that were your mentors or that you looked up to at that time?

Hesh: In 1985 I was one of the first guys doing graffiti in Hamburg and there were no mentors. But we looked up to the whole New York movement, after watching the movie Style Warz and reading Subway Art.

Daim: Basically all other sprayers had been kinda a mentor to me. Later on you realize which direction you are going. It was always very important to me to try technics to get to know different styles. I still wanna try a lot of things, but know I will not be influenced by others anymore. Finally, I have my own style.

Bomb: Which writers out there today do you respect?

Hesh: I give respect to everyone. I do not care if someone is doing good or bad graffiti - I just hate fakers and enviers. I think what graffiti needs is guys that do throw ups and tags and others that are able to do big walls with wild styles and characters.

Bomb: How do you define your style?

Hesh: I am doing a JD Boogie Style with shadow and light effects.

Daim: I am doing a Realistic Style with shadows, lights, and 3D effects.

Bomb: What other countries have you painted in?

Hesh: Italy, Yugoslavia, France England...

Daim: Denmark, France, Czecheslovakia, Switzerland...

Bomb: In your opinion what is the difference between styles in Germany and styles in the US?

Daim: I think that there is no clear difference. I think it is diffences between cities and countries, whether it is Euorope, Australia, or the US. But I think over here in Europe you will find the most bombed trains.

Bomb: Are there a lot of "Cross Out" wars out there?

Daim: There are not that many cross out wars here in Hamburg or in Europe for that matter. There is more respect and a lot of exchange between the sprayers. If trouble occurs it is mostly wiped out peacefully.

Bomb: What kind of paint are you using?

Daim: We are using Belton, Multona, Auto-K, Sparvar, Eisodur, and Marabu. Krylon is available in some cities in Europe but not in Hamburg. We can choose between a few dozen cans and between a few hundred colors.

Bomb: What are your plans for the future?

Daim: I want to travel to a lot of different cities and countries and possibly spray in places all over the world and get to know more people.

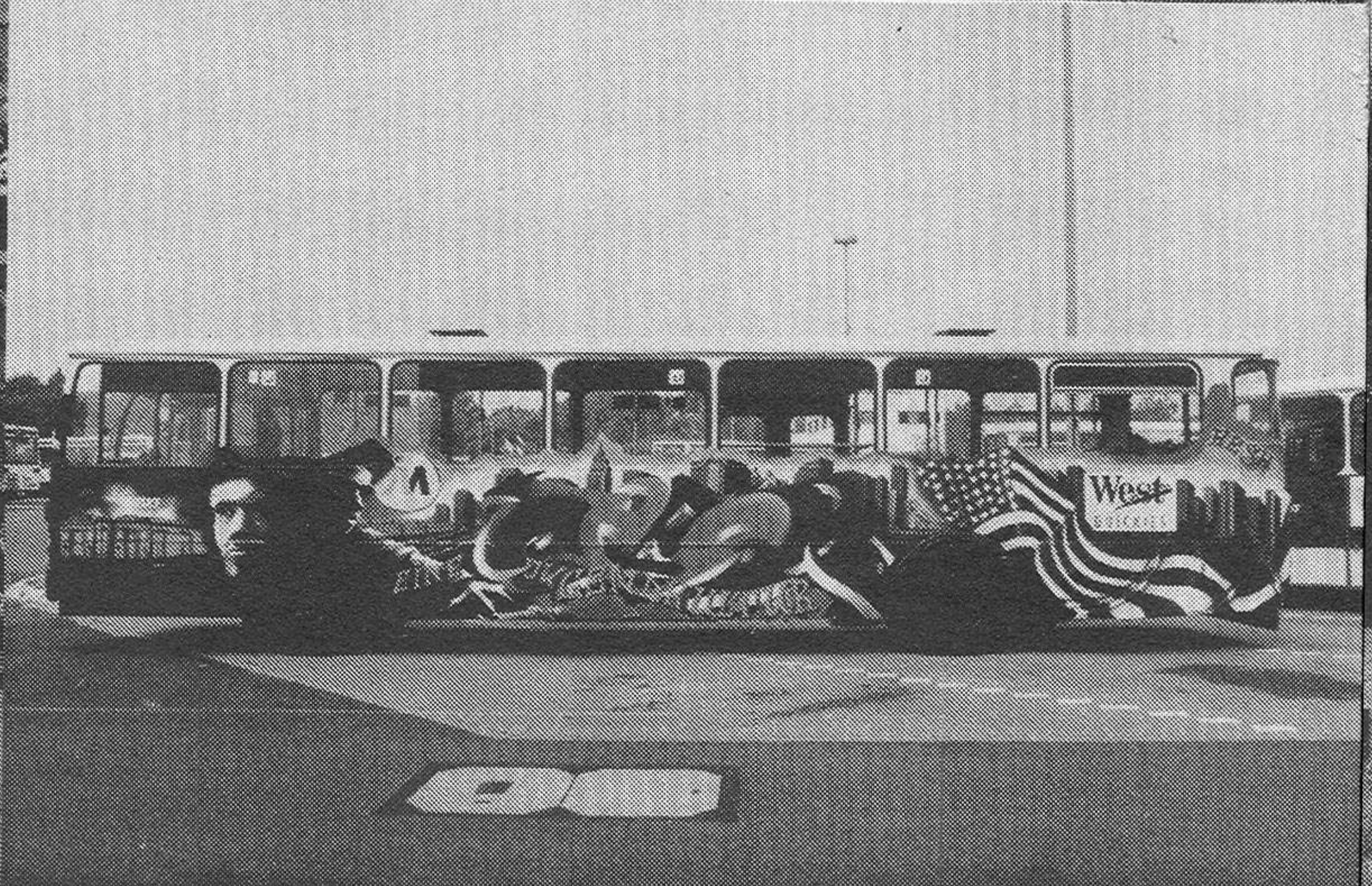
Hesh: To rock the whole world with my name HESH and meet a lot of cool people and writers.

TRASH-CAN
NESH
SKENA
SHORE
PANIK
KEATS
KEWEN
KARIO
SHIO
CAN2
DESIGN
PHEAM
LOOMIT
BATES
PHOS 4
KEL
TOAST
WOW
SAME
DEPARTMENT OF SILLY-STYLES

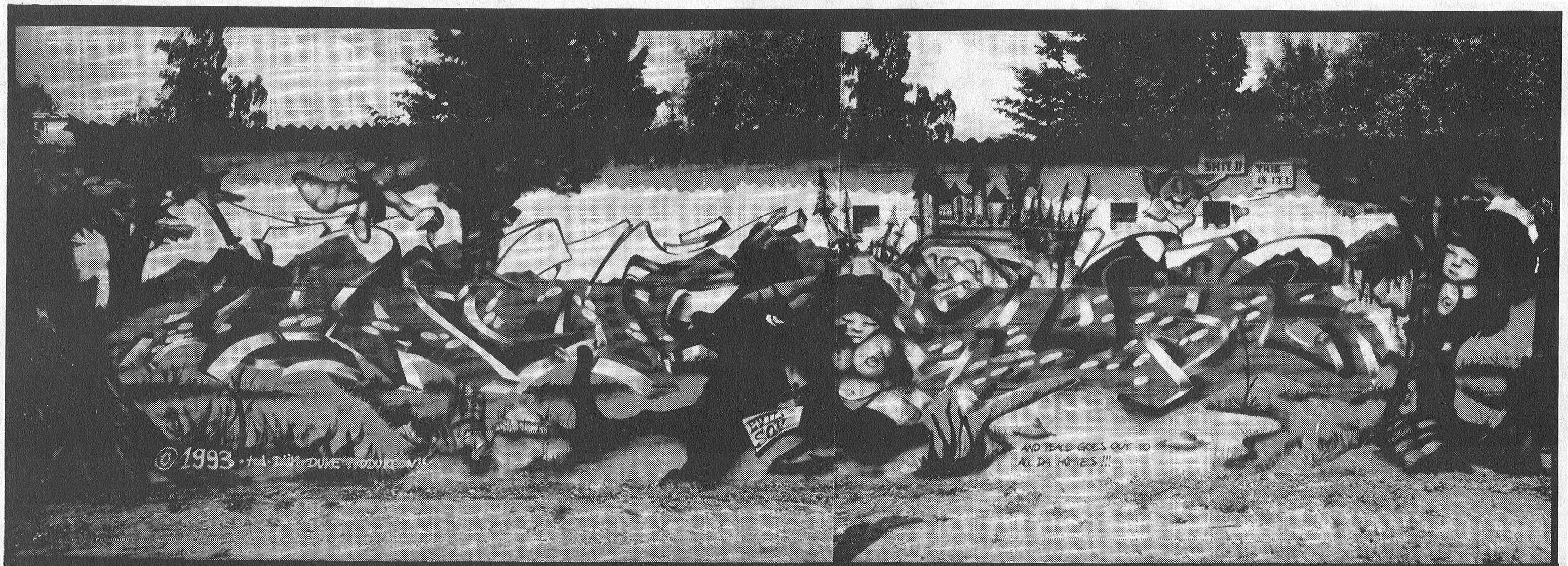
1992

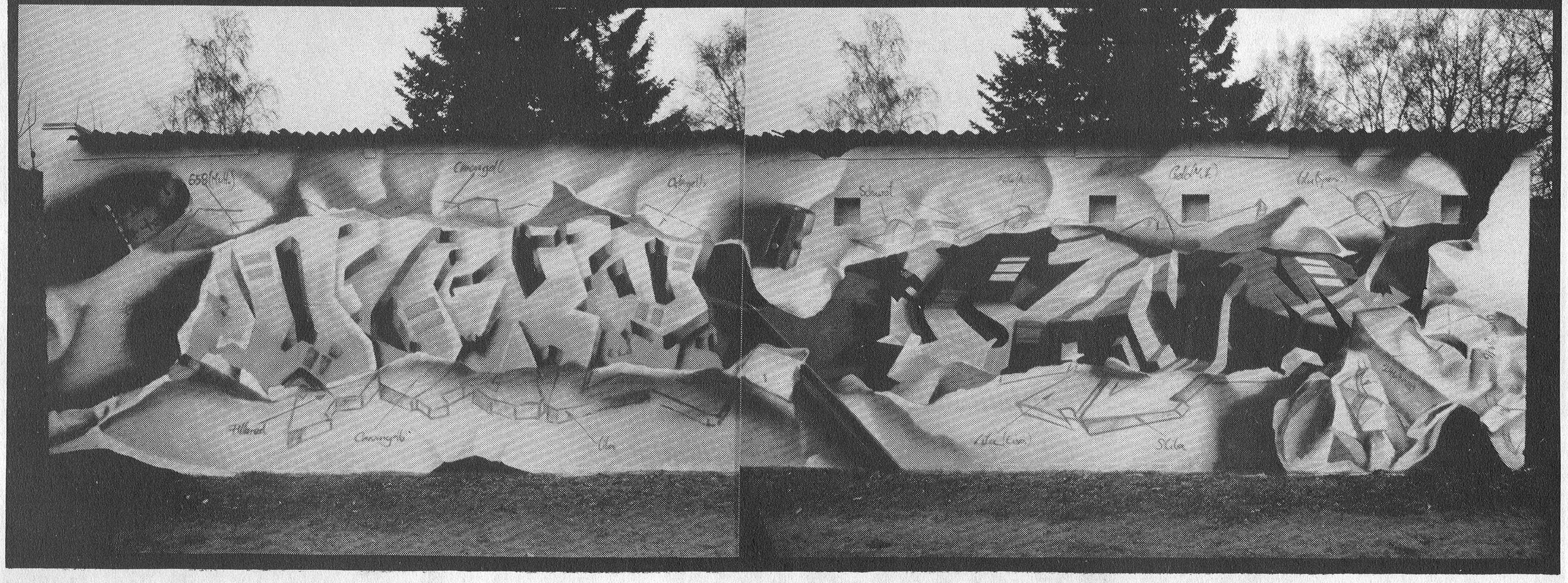
MARQUEE
MARQUEE
MARQUEE

© 1993

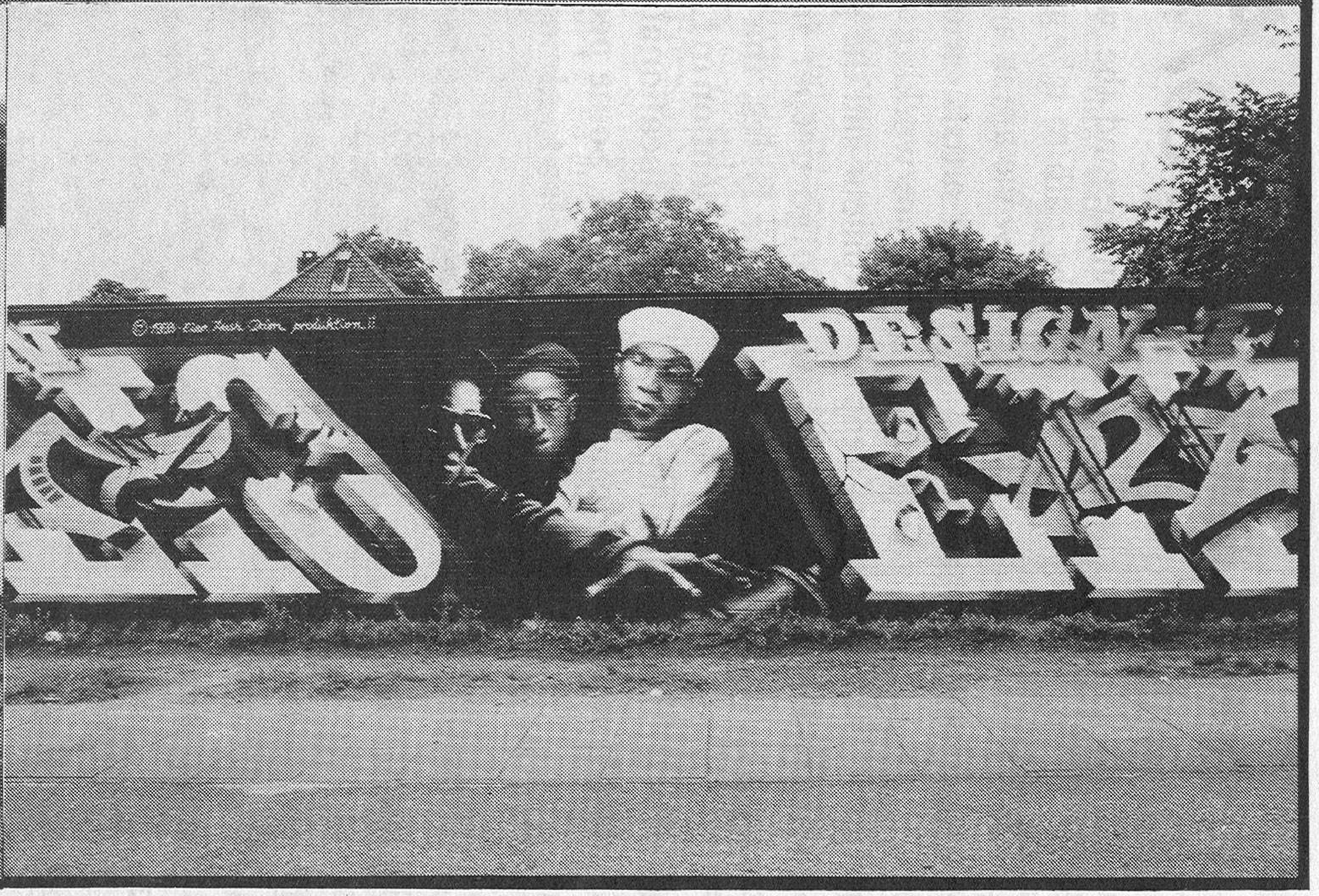

West

MASTER


© 1993 • ta • DAIM • DUKE PRODUCTION!!
SHIT!!
THIS IS IT!
AND PEACE GOES OUT TO ALL DA HOMIES!!!



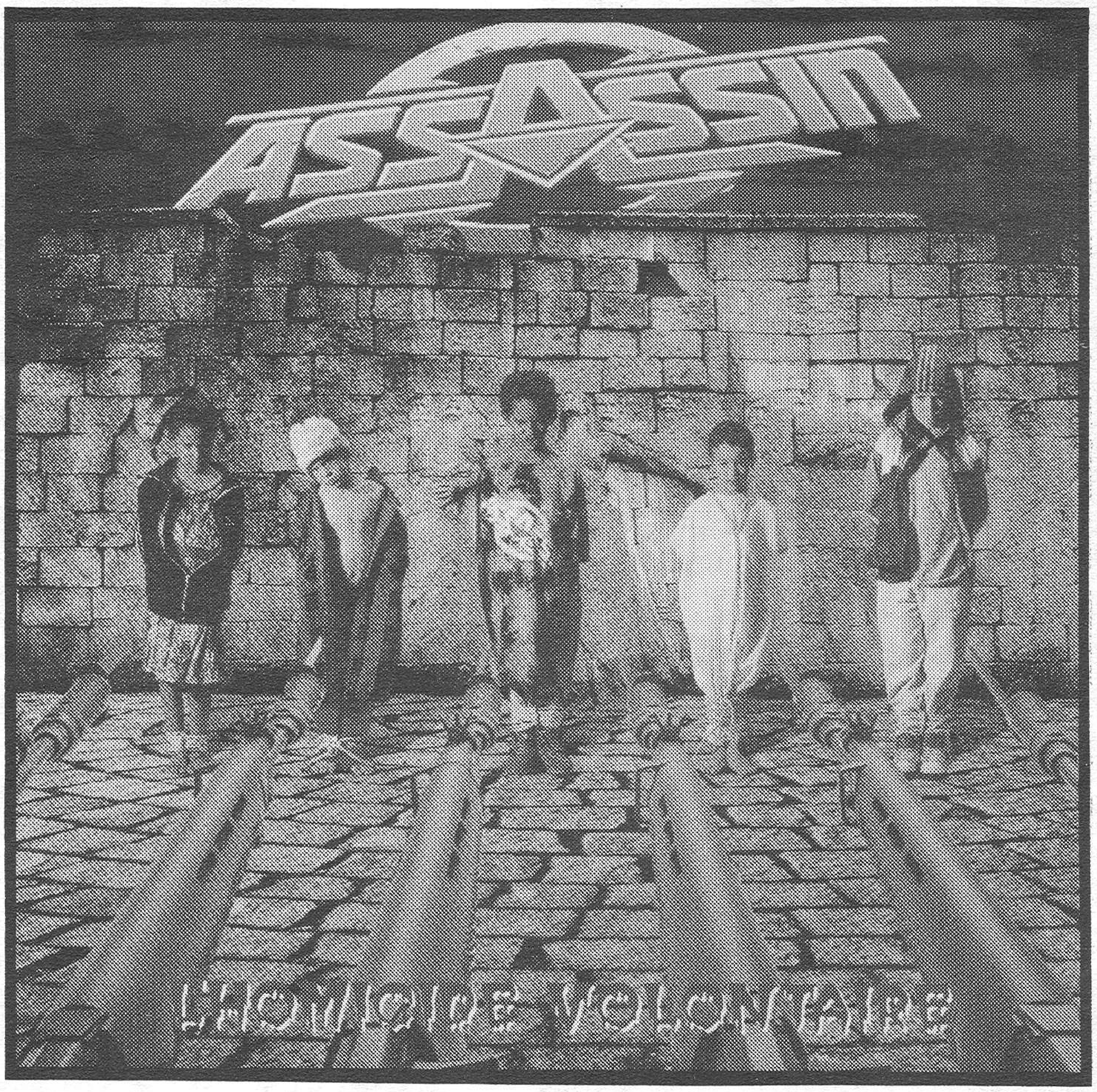
©DAIM 93


DESIGN

ASSASSIN

Conversation with Rockin Squat of the Paris rap group Assassin

How does Assassin function?
Assassin works like a academie, meaning that there is a core of people who run the group and its production unit, Assassin Productions, which is a record label that people will be able to count on for underground hip-hop in the coming years. People can contribute things, stay or leave... We try to avoid having a concept of the group, that would limit our actions and prevent us from going where we want to go. On the album Homicide Volontaire (Voluntary Homicide) we had Ekoue' from La Rumeur, Dr. Dre's backup singers on a couple of tracks, and various guitarists and bass players, as well as the producers of this record, namely me and Doctor L.

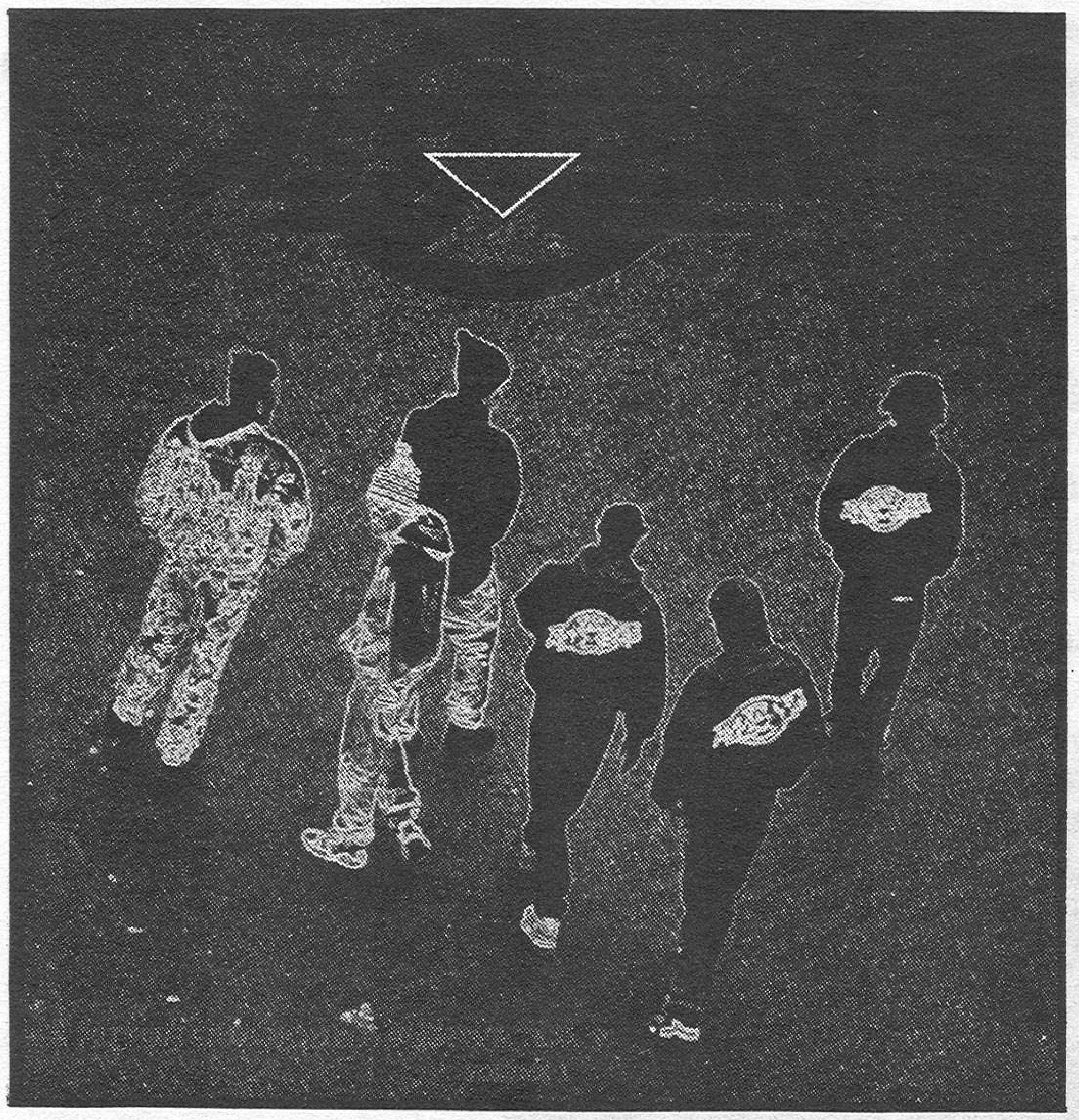


Can you explain Assassin Production's legal relationship with Delabel, as compared to other groups such as Alliance Ethnik that also has signed to them?
We didn't sign a artists deal with them. We, Assassin Productions, totally produce the group Assassin. We signed a distribution deal with the Delabel Group, which is part of Virgin/EMI. This allows us to have ample distribution and still be autonomous artistically. Through producing Assassin ourselves, we have come to understand the whole structure and the path to take to put out a record. Now we are in a position to produce other artists on our label. Currently we are working on two EPs for La Rumeur and the group Kabal.

To go deeper into the subject of your lyrics, the word that caught my attention in Le Systeme Schlaire (the educational system) was revolution. Some people use this word to refer to almost everything. Can you explain exactly what revolution means to you?
I believe that the educational system is one of the first tools that the powers use to manipulate people, even if the French educatinal system is a little more open to culture than others. It is a way to inculate the idea of social classes. For us, revolution means radical change, a different system.

So your not using the word metaphorically...
Right! Mankind is blowing its own brains out. The power structure has deep historical roots. So that's why we talk about revolution. But at the same time, it wouldn't get us anywhere if we blew everything up and then it got co-opted by something worse. Right now it's the neo-facist currents who are the most organized. All this is why we try to use our music to provoke some thought and educate. We do our best to do that, even though it's true that no music group has ever changed things on a political level. We make our contribution to music as a whole and we hope to inspire other people.

One of your songs say "*When we speak of Babylon/ We take it as a symbol/ That illustrates the momolopy/ The power structures hold on this country*" (Shoota Babylon, Assassin's next single). You have really developed your own style with these poetic images. Where does the strength of your lyrics come from?
For us (I say us because for me, we're part of a whole and try not to speak for ourselves alone, but rather try to convey ideas through individuals), the inspiration comes from everywhere. It comes from the wind, the sea, trees, oppressed people, the joy and suffering that surrounds us. We analyze



with our eyes, and that's where the lyrics come from. We are always looking at things; education comes when you go to get it, it'll never come to you by itself. We are always tryng to learn and understand, and at the same time find our own solutions, a way out.

The fact that Assassin exists on the French rap scene is pretty interesting. There aren't many groups like it. Since we live in the belly of the beast (Babylon), where everything is run by the capitalist system, many kids are already fucked up before they start rapping. What we tell young rappers is to get educated before they start speaking, because the more knowledge you have the more interesting you'll be for the people listening to you.

A subject that you seem to take up alot is the class struggle. How important is that for you?

For us, social classes means divide and rule. We're all human beings and I will never judge you by where you're coming from, but rather by what you do. Today everything is done to make people think the opposite. People are pitted against each other. That's how ghettos are run, by sticking the masses in them, discriminating against workers, etc. ...It's known that the priviledged classes are the ones that have the most access to education.

The track called "L'Objet" (Object) brings up the subject of women, and again your opinion is very original.

We are a group that respects women, as well as children and the people around us. The world we live in is run by men. Sixty-two percent of the world's illiterates are women. Seventy percent of the labor that creates the world's production is done by women, but they only get ten percent of that back. We live in a completely unequal world. I'm tired of women being treated like bitches. It's the only image we are given to them. I think that women are fed up with that too. It's only right that men speak up against it. Especially in rap music, we drag along all the old stereotypes of women.

What's up with graffiti art...

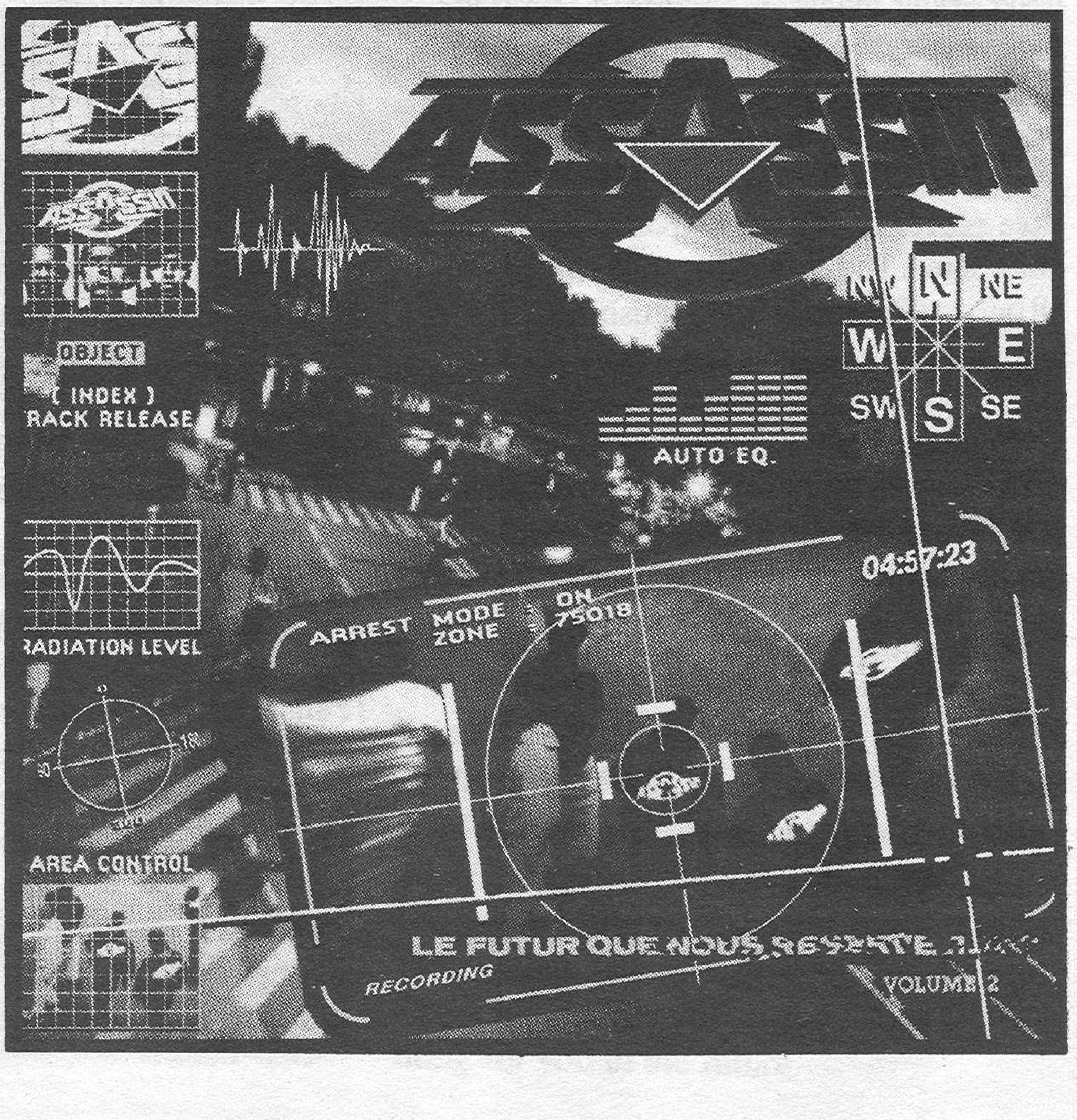
The whole graffiti trip is really an urban revolutionary art form: painting trains because you don't have access to galleries, we are down with that a hundred percent. Through our merchandising company, we try to get work for writers. Of course what I like in graffiti styles, but also the messages that get put in it. Graffiti is terrorism when it's not done in vacant lots but in unexpected spots instead. That's why I went nuts and painted so many trains. When you express ideas in your art form, that's when you get really interesting. I find that Mode 2 is on that level. His walls are always full of messages concerning women, children and class relations. But what I really like is tagging up the city.

What are your links with the rest of the hip-hop scene?

We have connections with people in hip-hop, as well as others. We're not souped-up B-boys who only hang around with other B-boys. We know this movement, we respect it and are down with it, but there are things to see everywhere.

Any last message?

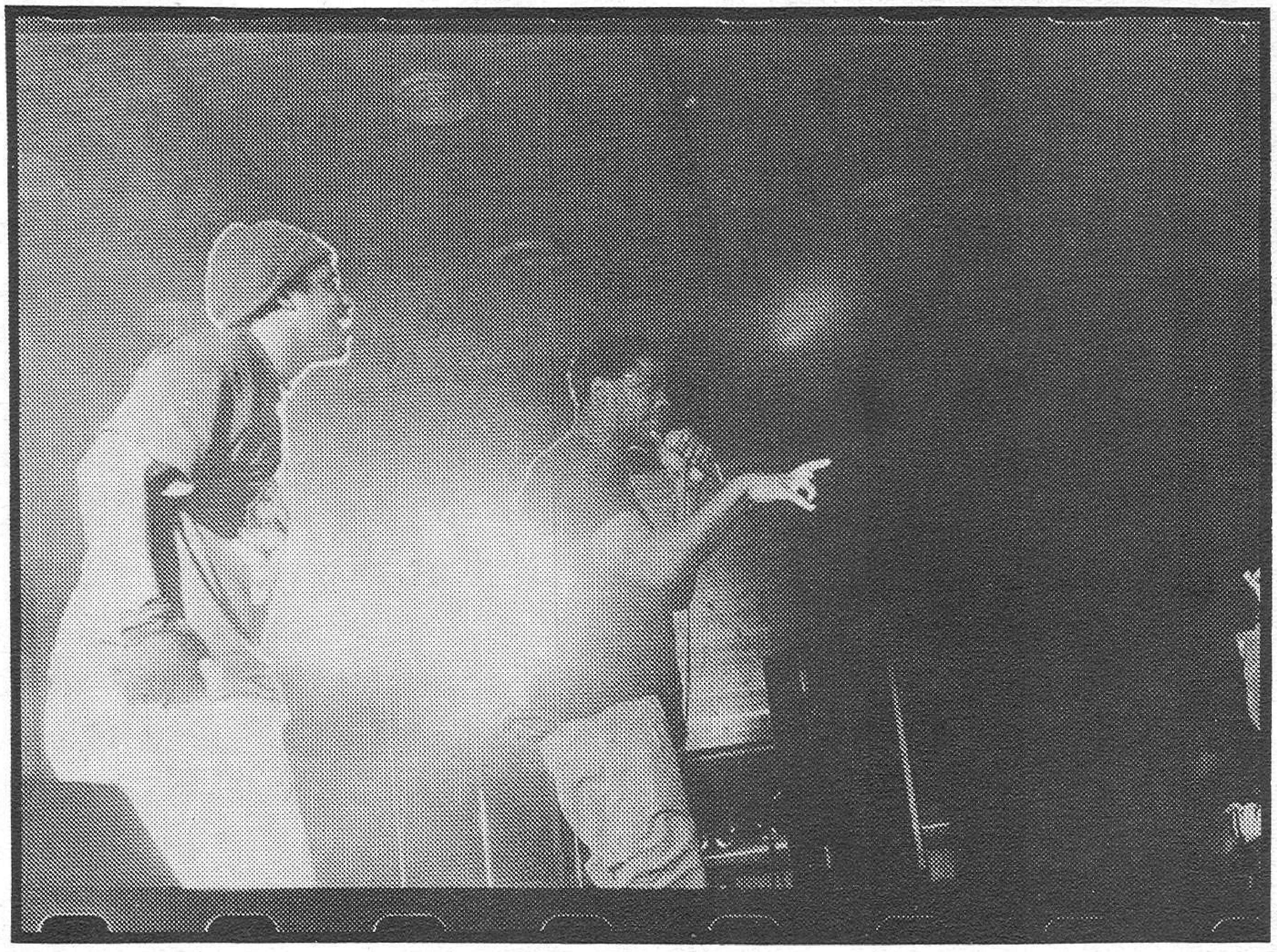
Thanks to everyone in contact with us and who write to us. It's the responses to what we do that proves to us thatwe exist. A big up to all of y'all. To all the writers and rappers working in the dark, don't let go. I' oddysse suit son cours (the odyssey continues).



UNDERGROUND

Underground Survivors

Imagine this . . . You just got off of a 10 1/2 hour plane ride equipped with a backpack, passport, four phone numbers, two pairs a pants, six t-shirts (Thanks to **David Paul**), three dat tapes in a plastic bag, 2 Eurail passes, one walkman, twenty local four track tapes, and a bad cold. You get off the plane with dried snot hugging your upper lip and walk three hundred yards dragging your "carry-ons" to the customs booth trying not to pass out. Now when you get to customs they hold, search, and interrogate you for five hours . . . then deny you access into the country. Now what you have just imagined was the kick off of the Mystik *Journeymen European World Tour part I*. I couldn't believe it, "Denied", sitting at customs ready to slap the shit out of someone. I remember the agent asking me "How much money do you have?" I looked at him with my bloodshot eyes, ran my finger across my dusty lip and blurted out "I got two dollars". He said "How do you expect to support your trip?" I showed him a current issue of our magazine *Unsigned and Hella Broke* and told him to put his main emphasis on the "Hella Broke part". After seeing that that didn't really humor him I told him "I'm getting some wired from the states, but we have places to stay and a round-trip ticket outta here". The customs agent went through all our stuff calling every English number we had making sure our story was true. After many phone calls and a lot of drama we were given admittance under one condition: "Don't perform anywhere paid or unpaid!" It seems you have to have special papers to perform. We just smiled and was like "Yeah . . . Ok!"



"Why do people that don't understand what you're saying always just stand in front of you and smile nodding their head?"

Our first stop was Derby, home of Europe's own underground kings **Suspekt**. Our contact at the station was **Blue Eyes** from the **United B-Boys of Europe** who promptly picked us up from the train station and took us to the house of his group member **Lenny**. The first night there and we got hella high off of tobacco from Marlboros mixed with bomb in a large zigzag. In Europe they mix tobacco with . . . well anyway I'm off the subject but we got a little taste of what was to come. The same night **Blue Eyes** and **Lenny** listened to our tape and was like "it's on!" That next week we ripped two underground shows in Bristol (less than a hundred miles away from London) and a radio show, interviews, and got hooked up to perform at a Breaking show in Switzerland and a large show in Norway. The show in Norway was thrown by the *United B-Boys of Europe* and was advertised all through Europe with a party bus leaving Germany the end of the week. The hip-hop scene in Bristol is packed with breakdancing, fast beats, and old school gear. Right before performing, there was a circle in the middle of the dance floor full of dancers grooving to the beats from one of the tightest sound systems I've ever heard. The show was being thrown by the **B.H.G.M** (British Hip Hop Ghetto Movement) featuring European acts: Deliverance, Killa Instinct, and Mystik Journeymen. Oh yeah, don't let me forget that **Transcript Carriers, 3pm,** and the **Numbskulls** was in the house. These are the groups that run the hip-hop scene in Bristol. A few days later we left Bristol at seven in the morning almost missing our bus back to London en route to Ramsgate Ferry Terminal. Before I go on I must tell you how cold it is in England, it goes from rain to sun to hail to sun to snow. When we got to the terminal it was cold as hell!!! We stood in the phone booths trying to shield the wind chill factor until the bus came. We finally got to the terminal and took our four hour journey across the sea to Ostende, Belgium . . . seasick! Luckily this time when we got to customs they let us through. We were met by Jay the Editor of *Vocab* magazine and he took us to meet Krucial, one of the tightest underground acts to come out of Belgium. Krucial lives under his uncle's apartment above a college cafe on the streets of Ghent. He played us some of his beats and the next day we made a song to one using only a tape deck, his DJ, and two mics. The two track finished product was dope and even had some bump in it. We went to a record store in Ghent and saw only a few hip-hop records but was hype to see **Saafirs'** single on the shelf. I felt like screaming "Oakland's in the House!" The next day once again late for the train station (because of our stop at Quik) bumping our **Bored Stiff** tape we headed for Cologne, Germany where we were met by Klause (One of the organizers of the show in Norway) Kristoph, and Thomas (Shotgun Prod.). We stayed with Kristoph and Thomas hitting fat bong loads of Hash and chopped up Marlboros bumping European hip-hop records. The next day we headed for Hamburg by train to take our party bus to Norway the next morning. This is when I realized I shouldn't have flunked my foreign language classes because English was not getting me and Tom too far . . . we had to speak very slowly. Why do people that don't understand what you're saying always just stand in front of you and smile nodding their head?

we sold hella Mystik Journeymen tapes with "ducktape" labels for fifteen dollars

The next morning we got on our bus, which was equipped with a stereo tape deck system that ran throughout the inside and everybody

SURVIVORS

had spliffs. The ride was gonna take twenty hours by bus and ferry so we bumped Mixed Practice, Black, and every four track tape we had until the Ferry Terminal. We got on the Ferry and lit up hella fat ones then got... seasick again watching *Disclosure* in the movie room. While I was passed out behind the seats on the floor of the movie room Tommy spotted someone throwing up in the chair. I HATE FERRY RIDES!!!!! Coming back to conscientiousness I realized we were there and grabbed my forty pound backpack and followed Tommy off the Ferry. Once again hassled by customs the whole bus was stripped and searched for drugs along with the passengers. Someone had told the agents what was up, I guess we shouldn't have been smoking in the dining facilities. They tried to strip search some but me and Tom was like "Naw, you can deport us!" So finally they let everyone back on and eight hours later and through a snow storm, we arrived to our point of destination - Oslo, Norway. The next night we rocked Oslo to a crowd of eight hundred people jumping through six of our songs and slam dancing to the last. This had to be the best show we did in Europe because the kids got so hype. After the show we found out that *Vocab* magazine was gonna put us on the cover of their new magazine. They have a tight scene out there with radio DJs like **Tommy Tee** (who plays the **Bomb Comp.** on his show regularly) rhymers **Blue Poets** and **Anarad** the Ruthless. We rocked the *United B-Boys of Norway Jam* with **Zombie Squad** (Holland), Suspekt, Sons of Noise (London), IQ (Germany), and Mental Disorder (Germany). Europe's top Breakdancer from Germany "Storm" was in the house showing fools what was up. That same night we sold hella Mystik Journeymen tapes with "ducktape" labels for fifteen dollars a piece to people at the show. The whole show was set up better than a lot of shows I've been too. Everything got weird after doing numerous autographs, they treated us like stars but we don't even be trying to have that mindset. At the crack of dawn the next morning we headed back to Hamburg for the night arriving at 11:30 pm ... tired. The next morning we woke up at 11 am and took a train to Amsterdam where we were met by **Precisely,** a fresh ass young producer from Gangadam. He took us to a cafe first . . . but that's another story. We did two radio shows that night and the first was "Daily Operation" with **DJ S.** which is the best local station then "Villa 65" with **Mental Case** which is nationwide including some of Belgium and Germany. The shit we did on "Villa 65" was amazing because the station was big and before we got there we were told that we would do our songs live but we thought we would be in a room with the DJ and do it with us three . . . No, No, No! Let me tell you that when we did our songs we did it on a stage in front of hella people while it was transmitted live across the nation of Holland, half of Belgium and Germany! That shit was FAT! The next morning we headed for Germany where **Rich** from *Behind the Post Office* in San Francisco had hooked us up with someone (Mike Hersh) who hooked us up a show in East Berlin at an acid Jazz club called **Delicious Donuts.** Pulling into Berlin for the first time was an experience of a lifetime! The train stopped, I peered through the dusty glass pane of the dark train and just dropped a tear for all my peeps that will never be able to live out their dreams to the fullest. This was week two of a tour that started with no money but was going strong. Walking into the club we could still see bullet holes in the walls from World War II! Who would ever think that the Mystiks would rock from behind the wall! This crowd was hype and a little older but they got deep into it. We had a large crowd of people that didn't understand English but bonded through our songs... now that's power of music. The next day we hung around Berlin with **Rakka** and **Skywise** who had interviewed us for *Backspin* magazine on the Ferry ride back from Norway. When you walk through the streets of Germany you can tell that graffiti is big out there with bombed trains and large pieces covering the brick walls. One of the best piecers in Europe is **Mode 2.** I remember he was in Norway with us and a magazine interviewed him and he said you can only take one picture of him but they took two. **Mode 2** must of jumped up so quick and punched the camera man in the jaw and snatched all the film out of his cam. A day later we hopped on a train to do a show in Bruhl with **Deliverance** (England) and **Two Bad Brothas** (Holland). From there we headed to Switzerland to do the breaking show where we met **DJ Nailz** (who gave fat props to **Asian Borns'** music off of **Solesides**) and the weather was the best out of all the places we had been too. When we got to the show we must of seen a crowd of four hundred watching junior high kids break against each other. DJ Nailz is a true pioneer for hip-hop in Switzerland so look out for him next time you're in Zurich. From Switzerland we made our way back, first stopping in Belgium to a party *Vocab* magazine threw for us and then back to England. We also spent a lot of time with our rhyming partna **Blade** who has to date sold over 45,000 records independently, outselling any other European hip-hop act. He is on the same shit we're on so he and **Suspekt** got much love. Now as I sum this story up understand that we went to Europe with nothing in our pocket ready for anything that could come our way and ended up with shows, friends, and memories. Life is yours if you take it . . . Keep it alive!!!

Vision
the brotha from anothera planet
an D.S.C. MAIN!

BREAKDANCING

A considered opinion by
Fluent-C, Suspense, Toze, and Zia

B-Boy crews received top billing at Hip-Hop jams and block parties, but that was long ago and far-away. The time was the very late 60's and early 70's. The place was New York. Between then and now a lot has happened to Hip-Hop, B-Boys and Breaking. All have wanned and waxed in popularity during the past quarter century, especially breaking. But now Breaking is back and it's time to remind ourselves of its roots in the United States and its chequered history in Britain.

The Seventies

Whether it began on the left or right side of America remains open to debate. Here in the U.K. we prefer to think both Los Angeles and New York contributed to its development. In New York, it was Kool DJ Herc, the very first Hip-Hop DJ, who coined the phrase B-Boy in 1969. The Jamaican-born performer had developed a technique of mixing records so that the dancing sounds never stopped. His particular skill, later copies by legions of others, was to meld the percussion breaks from two identical records, playing the break over and over, switching from one deck to the other. Kool Herc called these "Cutting Breaks".

When he performed the Breaks at crowded venues, such as the Hervalo in the Bronx, he would shout loudly 'B-Boys go down!' and this was the cue for dancers to cut and jump their gymnastics. Even today nobody is quite clear what Kool Herc meant by his phrase. Some suggest B-Boys stands for 'Boogie Boy' while others insist it means 'Break Boy'. The later has become the favored choice. But who were the original B-Boys and where had they learned their skillz? Again the answer is fairly straight-forward. They had simply adapted what they had been doing on the ghetto streets.

The pioneers were members of New York and L.A. street gangs who had taught themselves martial arts - in particular a Brazilian style - to defend themselves from attacks by rivals. Because of this many dance moves appeared aggressive and extremely violent during the early years. For instance, 'Uprock', performed correctly, can look very much like a scene snatched from a old Kung-Fu movie. 'Uprock' was probably the first form of Breaking. From it springs many other moves to continue the dance on the floor as a single rhythmic activity. It was so convincing that many over-zealous night club managers and their bouncers interpreted the dance as a real fight in the making. The fact is that sometimes is was.

While many youngsters learned quickly that it was easier as B-Boys to receive approbation from their peers and often earn large amounts of money as well from their performances, others still preferred to risk their lives and limbs on the streets in the needless pursuit of becoming gangstas. As a consequence some dancers remained committed gang members, determined to settle old scores and so sometimes battles did erupt on the dance-floors. Understandably the media reported these incidents and very soon Hip-Hop came to mean violence, crime and general trouble-making in the public's eye, although these negative qualities were found in other entertainment areas as well.

Over on the West Coast, meanwhile, many L.A. gangs were dancing in the streets too, but each was trying to out-do the others by showing off more complex and dynamic performances, still influenced by Kung-Fu. What 'Uprock' was to New Yorkers, 'Locking' had become to the Electro-Boogie-loving La-La youth. It had been started by Lockatron Jon and Shabba-Doo. Shabba was also responsible for introducing New Yorkers to 'Popping', which many claim to be the first, real hip-hop dance. They even go as far as to say they were performing it in 1969.

In New York local dancers added waves and smoother movements to the 'Popping', and that's the style which exists today. Soon it was very popular in discos and part of the 70's mainstream. At that time it was known as 'The Robot' and a early exponent was Charlie Robot who used to appear on American TV's "Soul Train" program. He took his style and added the pops and lock we recognize today. 'Locking', too, became part of the broad disco culture and many dancers adopted Breaking moves to expand their dance-floor routines. We need to look no further than the movie musicals of the 70's to underline the point. Remember John Travolta's Saturday Night Fever, "Roller Boogie" and even the anodyne Xanadu which starred the sweeter than sweet Olivia Newton John, an Australian export impossible to associate with Hip-Hop?

The Eighties

Everywhere new moves were being added to the form and to popularize them Broadway choreographers were sanding the raw edges and trying to format moves into a style which would not be out of place in 'Come Dancing'. Mainstream pop artists were blatantly stealing the B-Boy moves, claiming props for originality, and offering themselves to the suburban middle-classes as the ultimate in street cred. Sanitized and safe, of course. The ultimate 'lift' was probably used by Michael Jackson in the 80's when he did the 'Moonwalk', thrilling preteens and their parents, but the underground knew that the man owed a debt to veteran funksta James Brown. Brown had hatched the 'Goodfoot' dance-style which led to 'Floating' which led, yes, to the 'Moonwalk'.

'Popping", too, has been lost to its originator and become part of the credit list of Jeffrey Daniels, once with the hit-making group Shalamar, while countless others assume Tik & Tok invented 'Robotics'. Yet both moves had been performed brilliantly by street kids a decade earlier. Yet, without commerce kicking its resources into Breaking, would it have crossed the Atlantic and could it have survived? We'll never know the answer, but many underground crews earned a healthy crust from show-business during the early 80's. Record execs had found many of their artists incapable of mastering the B-Boys moves and decided instead to hire proper dance crews to front pop records, made by session singers and musicians to tease the public into believing it was receiving the Coke of Hip-Hop, the real thing. Rocksteady Crew, Breakmachine, Uprock and the Motor City Crew were some who sold their names and services for fronting these releases.

Britain's first real sample of B-Boys and Breaking came around 1982. It was handed out by the last person anybody would have expected, Malcolm Maclaren, who fathered Punk and gave birth to the Sex Pistols. It arrived as the full four... DJing, MCing, B-Boying, and Graf-Writing. A former art student and today a shrewd money-maker, Maclaren had released The Buffalo Girls. The disc's video featured Breaking by none other than The Rocksteady Crew, comprising Crazy Legs and Frosty Freeze, a New York duo who worked out in Central Park throwing new shapes and often battling the likes of the Incredible Breakers and Magnificent Force.

A bit later, The Rocksteady Crew appeared in 'Flashdance', the smash-hit movie of '83. They also visited Britain and so impressed a bunch of kids in Manchester that those kids decided to become part of the Hip-Hop Culture and call themselves Kaliphz, All this, coupled with the label Street Sounds bringing out electro-compilations, nourished the underground and B-Boys began to pop their heads above the sewer-covers to test the climate.

All seemed good. Crews like The Furious Five had made a hit with 'The Message' and Break Machine was reaching out to the public at large via 'Top of the Pops'. Jeff Daniels, dressed as his alter-ego Colonel Pop, exposed Breaking through the same show and his 'Popping' astonished the home audience. At clubs, his movements became the ones to copy if a man wanted to impress his partner. It wasn't easy, but in south London, there were enough devotees to fill a club whose members were only Hip-Hop dancers. The club called itself The Breakers Yard. 'Rap' and 'Breaking' became familiar terms, if not always used correctly - even by so-called Hip-Hop experts at record companies (note: So nothing changes?).

Young school kids - Black and White - throughout the country were taking Breaking to their hearts. Any chance to escape classes and perfect moves was taken. Truancy was the order of the day. For those who couldn't escape, school playgrounds were used to practice. On the way home or downtown, it was usual to see at least five other crews in action. Sometimes you'd end up battling one of them in a shopping center, only to be chucked out for causing a disturbance if you were caught by security staff. Later you'd chill with your new-found friends, chat topics of mutual interest and transcend the bull-shit barriers.

It all seemed so positive here in those days of the mid-80's. If you were young, everybody appeared to be involved in the Culture, either as a Breaker, a Writer, Rapper, Beatboxer or DJ. Perhaps you were a mixture of all. Hip-Hop brought out the best in us. We saw no reason why we could fail at anything if we had the commitment. We would be able to move our interest forward, improve them, overtake what the mainstream offered. We'd delve deep into Hip-Hop's history and give respect to its creators. British crews were receiving long overdue exposure on television. There was Broken Glass on 'Get Fresh' and The B-Boys on 'Saturday Superstore'. 'Blue Peter' featured The London All-Stars and, in 'Rock Around the Clock', Rock City were caught in the spotlight, breaking on chairs at the word-of-mouth jam held in the Town & Country Club.

Breaking was dictating the clothes people wore, with name-brands thriving on the craze. It began appearing on TV, not just in music shows, but in soaps as well. There it was in the 'Eastenders' and in 'Grange Hill', not to overlook the commercials for Carling Black Label. Movie-makers were in on the act, churning out their stuff, from 'Wild Style' through 'Beat Street' to 'Breakdance'. There were Electro Rock jams at London's Hippodrome, Free-style '85 in Covent Garden and UK Fresh '86 in the Wembley Arena. And yet... Even the Royals were getting into the act, although they may have misunderstood the term 'Breaking' as subsequent divorces suggest. The Buck House band had commanded The Rocksteady Crew to entertain them at their annual hop, The Royal Variety Show held in the company of their friends, the enormously rich and famous.

Newspapers and magazines suddenly made Hip-Hop respectable and so did the advertising between the features. Everybody that thought themselves sociological commentators scratched and scribbed their thoughts, leading to many futile intellectual debates where experts circled themselves until they disappeared up their bum-holes. The whole thing had become blunted. There was no sharp cutting edge left to the form. There was no quicker way to kill an exciting street movement than to have the Establishment join. Using hindsight it's easy to see now that the whole thing became too big, too quickly, and, as a consequence, too loose. It became a source for making easy money and no golden goose can survive if it's force-fed to lay too many eggs, too fast.

In less than five years the bubble had burst. Its mass appeal was lost. Once more it went underground, kept alive only by a hardcore minority. Before anything could happen again, Hip-Hop and the British B-Boys would have to get real.

The Nineties

A new generation took up the torch, Puma States and Kappa track-suits. They studied the culture and discovered groups like Brooklyn's Stetsasonic, Eric B. & Rakim, a duo from Queens who promoted a unity between Rap, Rock and Jazz. 'I hold the microphone like a grudge,' Rakim rapped, 'Eric B. hold the record so the needle don't budge.' They were out to put the Funk back in Hip-Hop.

And then there was Public Enemy. For the Brits, here was a breathtaking crew, who showed no mercy, took no prisoners. No wonder they were dubbed The Black Sex Pistols. Material by these groups was the kind of stuff that stirred the hearts of young rebels, but more was needed if the 90's were to see a return of the B-Boys in strength with their Breaking in the United Kingdom. Ironically it wasn't an explosion of Rap and Hip-Hop that was to do it.

It was sparked by the likes of Britain's Take That, Euro-Poppers Dr. Alban and Germany's Snap who shot up the UK charts with 'The Power', a clear case of hijacking Chill Rob G's version. Snap's video though, along with those of the others, captured a lot of Breaking and so raised its appeal once again.

This "new look" included new moves. 'The Wop' and '2-Hype' free-styles became part of the scene, popularized by the happy-go-luckly Kid-n-Play in their 'Getting Funky' video and the 'House Party' series of movies. True Hip-Hop headz, however, were still turning their backs on Breaking or, worse, abusing the dancers. At some jams they even poured beer on the floor to stop Breaking, claiming crews were taking up their space and looking ridiculous in their tracksuits. The breakers persevered.

Now, in the decaying 90's, B-Boys are back. There's massive interest in the dance form within the context of British Hip-Hop culture. The revival here is led by crews such as Born To Rock, U.K. Rocksteady, Second To None and others who have been featured regularly at Hip-Hop jams up and down the country. These days it's quite common to see B-Boys advertised on flyers promoting Rap and DJ acts.

Slowly the media has picked up these stories, asked the right questions and reminded readers, listeners and viewers how the scene used to be. Some of the original Breakers have been remembered and encouraged to re-emerge from the underground to resume their busting moves on Rap artists' videos.

Battles have resumed. The annual 'Battle of the Year', for example, is an international event held in Germany that is growing from strength to strength. Recent contests have had crews from several parts of Europe showing off their skills. Last years battle was videod and there are two versions on sale. In the 1996 Battle of the Year to be held September 6&7, Born to Rock expect to find a place in the finals, supported by DJ First Rate who works with them at the jams. He rocks the house with his cutting and Blemmer leads the 'Popping' routines.

After the wilderness years, Breaking is back, again growing in respect as an integral part of the Hip-Hop scene. Rap is no longer the only representative of the culture upon which the whole is judged. In south London, for instance, the Ghetto Grammar Workshop has introduced Breaking and Writing to its study courses, alongside the existing Rap and DJing classes.

What's strange is that while the majority of the best jams are held in London, the elite Breakers come from outside the capital. For example, at a battle recently staged at the Subterrania, both crews were from out of town. Born To Rock was one, the other, Second To None from Bournemouth. It's B-Boys like them who are taking the dance to new levels and becoming more and more in demand to perform at shows and Hip-Hop jams. Once again they're the focus of attention, making Hip-Hop more exciting and complete.

How long will the latest trend last? Nobody knows, but we're gonna enjoy it while it does.

This article originally appeared in Downlow Magazine issue #11. Re-printed by permission from Downlow Magazine.

GOSSIP & RUMOURS

by David Paul

B-Boy Paraphernalia - Ahhh... video! Since we can't be everywhere and see everything video has come in very handy for b-boys/b-girls and fans of b-boyin'. Even if you were "there" if you possess a video you can rewind, freeze frame, slow motion and rewatch and study moves by true b-boys. Below is a small listing of videos that are floating around. If you know of any others please let me know by contacting me at the address at the end of this article.

Of course movie wise there is **Beatstreet** with the famous battle scene at the Roxy as well as **Wildstyle** and the documentary **Style Wars** that ball feature some b-boyin but if you want tons of uprocking, downrocking, power moves and more check out the following videos.

Probably the most famous b-boy crew of all time The Rocksteady Crew are featured on four different video tapes. **Rocksteady Crew #1** features footage from the Zulu Nation 1994 Anniversary with footage of the Rocksteady practice from the day before (includes EZ Roc, b-boys from Canada, and some guy from Italy who is pretty dope). Also features Kool Herc in the circle at the jam. He's too big to dance but man does it make you smile to see him there. **Rocksteady Crew #2** features scenes from four different jams; The Apollo, The Grind, a Rocksteady New Years Eve party, and the Bring Back the Beat jam... Ken Swift still kicks ass! **Rocksteady #3** features footage from various Rocksteady Anniversaries including breaking in the rain on cement and b-boys from Japan. **Old School Rocksteady** features two documentaries that were made on the Rocksteady Crew; the 1981 documentary *Breakin'* and the 1982 documentary *Rocksteady*. The South Bronx boogie boy Mr. Wiggles from the Rocksteady Crew also has his own solo video called **Mr. Wiggles Boogie Boy Video**.

Wreck Sessions is a fat video that features b-boyin' in Switzerland and the It's All Good B-Boy Battle from Canada (east coast). The battle from Canada features three seperate crew battles that are each 10 minutes long featuring the following crews from Toronto and Montreal; Bag-O-Tricks, Intrikit, Raccoons, and Floor Rock. The annual european b-boy competition **Battle of the Year 95** official video is now available. This event from Germany features both group routines as well as Out of Control vs. Flying Steps and Enamy Squad vs. The Family. A must have for all b-boy fans. Also the magazine Graphotism also has a version which might be good to get since some of the group routines were edited on the official video due to time constraints. This version also features a Judges showcase.

Radiotron #2 from Southern Cali (USA) features eighty minutes of b-boyin' and popping & locking including a battle between Freestyle and Renegades. I heard that at one of the last Radiotrons they had Michael Jackson's film crew film the event... hmmm. The next Radiotron is scheaduled for April 13th and will feature Style of Elements vs. X-Man. Word has it that the next Radiotron video will feature footage from the last three events since they occur every month or two. The West Coast Rocksteady Crew recently held B-Boy Summit #3 on February 23rd & 24th in San Diego, California. There were circles inside and outside the venue as well as great performances by Jurrasic 5 and Kurtis Blow/Whipper Whip/Donald D. I don't know if there will be a video but there is a video of the **B-Boy Summit #2** that features the Rocksteady Crew battling a crew from Japan (the Imperials I think). A video that I haven't been able to find is a instructional video called **The Art of B-Boyin'** from Florida and I hear that there is a b-boyin' documentary in the works called **The World of B-Boyin'**.

The 1995
European
Breakin
Contest

That about wraps it up for videos but before I jet I'd like to tell you about some cassette tapes that feature music that is perfect to b-boy to, great for practice sessions. Mr. Wiggles has three different tapes available; **Rocksteady #1**, **Rocksteady #2**, and **Shaolin Beats**. DJ B-Mello has **Old School B-Boy** and DJ Phantom has **Music To Break To**. DJ Double D's **Old School Electro** is also good and Q-Berts **Pre School Break Mix** and DJ Rip One's **True Skool** are also excellent tapes to dance to.

This & That - The **Rocksteady Anniversary** is set for July 26th, 27th and 28th in New York. On the 27th there will be a dj battle between the **X-Men** (Roc Raider, Sinister, and Rob Swift) and the **Invisible Scratch Pickles** (Q-Bert, Disk, and Shortkut). Thanks to **Tonelius Olivier** for dubbing me a cassette of 15 tracks by **Prophets of Da City** from South Africa, real nice lyrics and scratching (their DJ even has a few solo tunes). Since we're on the international tip keep your ears open for **Meta Bass 'n' Breath** out of Australia. Is it just me or are all the groups in New York taking this Billie Willie thing too far, overkill. New singles include; "The Bizness" by **De La Soul featuring Common Sense**, **Digital Underground's** back with "Oregano Flow" on Radikal Records, **Ghostface Killer with Raekwon** with "Motherless Child", and **Mic Geronomo's** "Wherever You Are". New albums include the soundtrack for "Sunset Park", "Kollage" by **Bahamadia**. "Killa Kali" by **Celly Cel**, **Ice T** returns with "VI: Return Of The Real", **The Geto Boys** have re-united for "The Resurrection", "Ill Mannered Playas" by **Ill Mannered Posse**, and **Cella Dwellas** with "Realms In Reality". Other records to be on the lookout for include; **Wise Intelligent** (the whole album), **Delinquent Habits** (What It Be Like), **Large Professor** (Mad Scientist), **Masta Ace** (check the b-side of his new single), **2 Pac** (with not just double but Quad-vinyl), **MC Eiht**, **Mannish**, **Fugees**, **Shyheim**, **Chino XL** (the albums FAT), **Positive K**, **Kool Keith** (Dr. Octagon), and **Chill Rob G**(Let Me Know Something).

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DJ MIX TAPES & BREAKDANCING VIDEOS FOR SALE

MIX TAPES are just $11 a tape - add $1 for shipping and handling per cassette ($3 overseas per tape)
Add $3 for shipping & handling per video tape ($8 per video overseas shipping)

KID CAPRI (New York)	
52 Beats	52 breakbeats cut up on the wheels with two turntables and a mixer
DOO WOP (New York)	
Live 95	freestyles by Keith Murray, Q-Tip, Busta Rhymes, Fat Joe, M.O.P., Guru, Wu-Tang, and more!
Live 95 part 2	more live hip-hop
B MELLO (Seattle, WA.)	
Blends part I	34 songs remixed with different beats (dope!)
Blends part II	Look out! 39 songs remixed this time.
Old School B-Boy	b-boyin' tracks to break to -Boogie Down Bronx, Crazy Cuts, Planet Rock and more
Q-BERT (world champion / scratching maniac - San Francisco, CA.)	
Pre School Break Mix	Tons of breaks & tons more scratching
Shiggerfragger Show I	live on the 1 & 2's - Q-Bert, Disk, and Shortkut (90 min.)
Shiggerfragger Show II	live on the 1 & 2's - Q-Bert, Disk, and Shortkut (90 min.)
Shiggerfragger Show III	live on the wheels of steel - Q-Bert, Disk, and 8-Ball
Shigger Fragger Show IV	Four Djs on five turntables. Features Q-Bert, Disk, Shortkut, and Flare on the tables and a freestyle by Clever Jeff.
DJ Babu (from the Beat Junkies)	
Beyond Comprehension	1994 West Coast DMC Champion Babu gets nice on the turntables.
DJ RIP ONE (L.A., CA)	
True Skool	4-tracked Old School Hip-Hop with a B-Boy approach (great for b-boyin') - lot's of scratching
Turntable Expressions	Hip-Hop mixed on the 4-track with a lot of scratching
DJ RECTANGLE (San Diego, CA.)	
Ill Rated	former DMC DJ Champion & Warren G's DJ mixes and scratches hip-hop like mad.
KOOL DJ E.Q. (Las Vegas, NV)	
Mastermixes	also features guest dj sets by Q-Bert and Rob One
1200 HOBOS (Mr. Dibbs & DJ Skip from Ohio)	
Tapes•Skills•Techniques	fresh hip-hop cut, scratched, broken down and re-arranged... guaranteed to blow your mind!!!
DJ PREMIER (GANG STARR, WBLS)	
Thunderstorm	recorded live from 107.5 FM WBLS (commercials have been edited out)
WQHT 11/24/95	Primo gets busy on the wheels of steel
FREESTYLES (F A T freestyles from radio shows & live concerts)	
FreestyleRaps #1	Kane, Redman, Biz, Nas, Organized Konfusion, Lord Finesse, Masta Ace and more
Freestyle Raps #2	Ol Dirty Bastard, Kool Keith, Rakim, Kurious, KRS-One, Souls, Jamalski and more
Freestyle Raps #3	Snoop, Method Man, Biggie Smalls, KRS One, Big L, Nas, Del, Fat Joe, etc.
Phat Azz Freestylez #1	Das Efx, Big L, Biggie, Tragedy, Kool Keith, Beastie Boys, L.O.N.S., Masta Ace, M.C. Lyte, Tribe and more
Phat Azz Freestylez #2	Casual, Saafir, Kurious, Charlie Brown, Fat Joe, Pharcyde, Nice & Smooth, Aceyalone, Wu-Tang and more
SAAFIR VS. CASUAL	the Hierogylphics / Hobo Junction battle from KMEL radio in San Francisco
DJ PHANTOM	
MUSIC TO BREAK TO	classic b-boy joints to breakdance to
MR. WIGGLES	
ROCKSTEADY CREW VOL. #1	straight forward beats to break to put together by Wiggles from the NY Rocksteady Crew
ROCKSTEADY CREW VOL. #2	more beats & breaks to b-boy and boogie to
SHAOLIN BEATS	Hip-Hop beats with Kung-Fu samples... great to break to

Bootleg Betty Presents ROCKSTEADY CREW #1 - $20
B-Boying (breaking)footage from Zulu Nation Anniv. 1994 plus the Rocksteady practice footage. Over 1 hour long!

Bootleg Betty Presents ROCKSTEADY CREW #2 - $20
B-Boying footage from Apollo, The Grind, Rocksteady New Years Party, Bring Back the Beat Jam in Conn., and footage from Rap City.

ROCKSTEADY CREW #3 - $20
more b-boyin' from the Rocksteady Crew... includes footage from various Rocksteady Anniversaries.

Bootleg Betty presents OLD SCHOOL ROCKSTEADY - $20
features two documentaries on the Rocksteady Crew; *Breakin'* from 1981 & *Rocksteady* from 1982

Mr. Wiggles BOOGIE BOY VIDEO - $18
Solos, battles, and interviews with the South Bronx boogie boy Mr. Wiggles from the Rocksteady Crew.

WRECK SESSIONS - $20
65 minutes long with b-boyin' from Switzerland and the It's All Good B-Boy Battle in Canada with three crew battles... SUPER FAT!

RADIOTRON 2 (The West Coast Breaking Federation Championship) - $27
features eighty minutes of b-boys and b-girls breaking, strutting, locking, and popping. Plus the Renegades vs. Freestyle battle.

BATTLE OF THE YEAR 1995 (Germany) - $20
Crews from all over Europe (United B-Boys of Europe) battle for the b-boyin' title. Includes group routines as well as two battles - Out of Control(Denmark) vs. Flying Steps(Germany) and Enamy Squad(Hungary) vs. The Family(France/Italy). You gotta see this!!!

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